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MR. BALDWIN made a vigorous protest in the House on Wednesday against the "wave of hysteria" about our national position. His rebuke, as we understand it, was not directed at Mr. Ormsby-Gore, who had said that we were entering "a phase of crisis even more difficult and acute than we had yet experienced." That may very well be the truth. But it is no reason for panic or for demands for another £100,000,000 worth of economies, and we are glad to see the Acting Prime Minister rapping the panic-mongers over the knuckles. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer, even after allowing for the yield of the tariff and for the saving that may be anticipated from a Conversion, will be faced by a deficit. But this must not be met by further inroads on the social services, which have already been badly crippled. We trust that the Government will make it plain that they are not lending an ear to the reactionary clamour for the raising of the school entrance age—and even for lowering the leaving age.

* * *

It is to be hoped that Lausanne will give us relief. But the omens are none too good. Even if the French are in a better mood than they look like being over reparations, the difficulty of the American war debt remains. Nobody expects Germany to pay. Will the United States expect us to pay? The arrangement which has just been made for repaying the instalments suspended by the Hoover moratorium seems to suggest that the Americans mean strict business. But, as Sir John Simon has pointed out, this arrangement is a purely formal affair, and does not affect the larger "question of principle"—namely, the resumption or non-resumption of the regular half-yearly payments in July, when the Hoover moratorium expires. To most people in this country such a resumption will appear unfair and practically impossible; but the Americans, we are afraid, do not see it in that light. Evidently they will have to be persuaded. We shall look to the British Government to make—before, at, or after Lausanne—another "arrangement" with the United States, an arrangement for keeping some of our money on this side of the Atlantic.

* * *

France is still without a Government that is a Government in anything more than name, and will continue to be so for some days yet. Meanwhile, the hopes of coalition, or even of effective co-operation, between Radicals and Socialists are fading fast. M. Herriot's hints about his policy have been few and guarded. But, in the sphere of foreign affairs at least, they have been ominous. He has harped again on the sacred rights of France, and of the need of security. Till security is guaranteed, there cannot be any serious reduction of armaments. A few francs might be saved on barracks and similar trifles; but, as things are, M. Herriot is "anxious to improve and modernise our military equipment." As for reparations, France must

not strengthen Hitlerism by being too hard; but neither must she encourage it by being too soft. These sentiments are not only depressing to the Socialists; they have provoked protests in M. Herriot's own camp, and if he is not careful he may have to count the Left-wing Radicals among his adversaries. His confabulations with the President of the Republic and MM. Tardieu and Flandin are another pointer. They can hardly mean a Radical Government with M. Tardieu and his friends in it. But, taken with other things, they probably do mean that the next Prime Minister of France is getting ready to be as good a Frenchman, and as bad a European, as the last.

* * *

A correspondent called attention in our columns last week to a resolution submitted to the Committee for Moral Disarmament. The resolution was that "no training of a military character, either of formation or drill, shall be given to children or young people under the age of conscription or of voluntary enlistment." It was put forward by the British Delegation, and was not unnaturally taken by our correspondent as a development of official British policy. We now learn that the same delegate who put it forward subsequently withdrew it—no doubt under pressure from quarters that can be guessed at. So much for that little flutter in moral disarmament! As for any other kind of disarmament, there is no movement to record. All is still quiet—lamentably quiet—on the Geneva front. The hope of getting any substantial results from the Conference are steadily receding. The danger of getting no results is pretty well realised, except in the one country where its realisation is most important. France is the master of the situation. If France will reduce her armaments, others will. If France refuses, not only does she hold others back; she worsens the position in Germany, her own political relations with Germany, and everybody's chances of escaping from the economic quagmire. Armaments may seem to the French (to the madder part of the French, that is) to mean security. But they obviously do not mean confidence in the world at large, and without a restoration of confidence a trade recovery will remain as remote as the moon.

* * *

Meanwhile the armament firms in every country are enjoying a little boom. Munition-makers, internationally organised, still hold to the motto laid down for them by the munition king in *Major Barbara* and arm both sides in any conflict that is going on irrespective of consequences. British firms are not playing the major part in supplying the munitions of war in the Far East, but following a question in the House of Commons, the Board of Trade has published some interesting figures about our arms exports to China and Japan. The value of the arms we supplied to Japan from August, 1931, to February, 1932, inclusive was £123,158, that is, an average of £17,594 per month. The amount sent by us to Japan in March, 1932, was £40,828 and in April £40,158. China has not been so good a customer. Her average imports from this country from August, 1931, to February, 1932, were £4,416 per month: in March the figure rose to £21,939, but dropped in April to £2,111.

The Labour Party, with some Liberal support, attempted this week to delete the provision in the Finance Bill which gives the Import Duties Advisory Committee power to propose the removal of commodities from the free list. The defeat of this amendment was a foregone conclusion, and the Government will now have power to take any commodity off the free list on the Committee's advice, and to impose a duty on it at once subject only to subsequent parliamentary endorsement. Thus, the procedure of legislation by Order in Council receives a further extension and Parliament's powers are further restricted. Of this we, for our part, make no complaint, since we believe that a wide authority to the Government to act outside Parliament is necessary under present conditions. The thing to object to is not the method proposed, but the use to which it is to be put. For the free list is this country's last remaining safeguard against Protection *à outrance*—Protection such as Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere desire, Protection which rests on the assumption that all imports are desperately wicked, and that a country can sell in the world market without buying anything in return. It is true that the Import Duties Advisory Committee still stands between us and the full acceptance of this doctrine; but how frail is now our defence! We shall not "go th whole hog" all at once; but at the present rate it will not be long before our tariff is as high as America's, and even sillier.

* * *

The fate of Mr. Morrison's Passenger Transport Bill is still hanging in the balance. Even if the Government wants to go on with it there is known to be strong Die-hard opposition in the House of Lords. There the Bill is regarded, even in the form in which it emerged from the Joint Committee of both Houses which considered it in the last Parliament, as a piece of pronouncedly Socialistic legislation, despite the backing given to it by Lord Ashfield and the interests which he represents. It is now suggested that the Bill may be further cut about in order to placate the Die-hards, presumably by giving the private shareholders additional safeguards and by removing the corporation which is to manage the unified service still farther from control by the Government. If this is done, many of the original supporters of the Bill will be disposed to withdraw their backing. The concessions made to the shareholders—especially the power to appoint a receiver—were already over-generous in the Bill as it stood after the committee stage. Of course, the more the Socialists oppose it, the more readily will the House of Lords be likely to accept it. But, if it is to be further amended on the lines now proposed, it will certainly not be generally acceptable as a definitive settlement of the problem of ownership and control in the London transport service.

* * *

It is really a sign of progress when men like Sir Thomas Horder and Sir Humphry Rolleston are willing to take part in a birth-control conference. This conference, as Sir Thomas said, was concerned to bring the subject from the field of propaganda into that of science, and it was attended by an influential body of doctors and scientists. The same may be said of the conference on

sterilisation of the unfit which followed it. Here is a matter on which it would have been impossible to get public discussion a few years ago. To-day we have a conference of leading doctors and lawyers and an expert committee, officially appointed, to investigate the issues involved. These topics have been dealt with too much as matters of sentiment: there is now reason to hope for scientific knowledge.

* * *

The Committee on the relations of art and industry has just presented its report. Its conclusions should be studied by every one, but most of all by manufacturers. Recollections of the recent British Industry Fair at Olympia would suggest that at present comparatively few firms realise that there should be any relationship between industry and art, though there is probably a greater supply of genuine talent in England to-day than at any moment since the end of the eighteenth century. In too many industries the mildewed artistic traditions of the Victorian Age still survive. As the report points out, the economic system of the country has recently been reversed and the manufacturers have succeeded in sheltering themselves from the foreign market. The least, then, that they can do is to make some effort to provide us with an equivalent for what we have now been denied, that is to say, the best products from abroad. The report suggests a series of permanent and semi-permanent exhibitions throughout England, to be further developed as circumstances permit. The expenses would amount to some £10,000 a year. This is really another case of "educating our masters," for too many manufacturers are always sure they know far more about what ought to be their own business than artists who have devoted their whole lives to a study of industrial design. The reign of the "what-not," as Mr. Roger Fry argues in a lively and characteristic appendix, is far from over.

* * *

We are growing accustomed to finding that our judges are human. It is not long since there was a squabble between the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Justice Scrutton, and now Mr. Justice McCardie, from his less elevated seat in the judicial hierarchy, "regrets that it has become his duty" to administer a "public rebuke to Lord Justice Scrutton." Just what the position will be if the Judges in appeal are denied the use of Mr. Justice McCardie's notes we do not know. Can Mr. Justice McCardie be compelled to produce them or must their Lordships decide the appeal without a record of the case to guide them? One practical conclusion is that there ought to be a full shorthand note of all court proceedings. England is, we believe, the only civilised country in which the Judge laboriously makes his own longhand record. A second point of interest arises from the substance of the dispute between the two Judges. Lord Justice Scrutton began the row by some caustic remarks about Mr. Justice McCardie's various "sociological" remarks on the bench. Now, there is much to be said against a Judge uttering even the wisest *obiter dicta* about the propriety of ladies' underclothing or the merits of abortion. But we are altogether on Mr. Justice McCardie's side in holding that a Judge should concern himself with the economic and social tendencies of his age. Lord Justice Scrutton is the victim of a delusion if he believes that there is such a thing as pure law divorced from social content. The law does change all the time, and it will only change usefully if Judges are conscious of the social philosophy they are applying.

* * *

An Irish correspondent writes: The Budget and its immediate effects have completely overshadowed the Oath. Tariffs have come home in earnest to men's business and bosoms. The net has been thrown so wide that Customs Officers, reinforced by transfers from other Departments, and working all hours of the day and night, are wrestling with a congestion such as the Port of Dublin has never known. The most vexatious of all the imposts are those on newspapers and periodicals and on packages. Wholesale newsagents have had to make special and costly arrangements to pay charges and take delivery, but if this week's supply of periodicals be underneath a huge pile of dutiable articles, what ingenuity can release it in time? A shorthand weekly, much used by students, has not come to hand in the shops for two weeks. The *Universe* is less than 320 square inches and must pay the tax in spite of its strong appeal to Catholics, but boxing and sporting weeklies are free. A modification has already been made in the duty: it immediately brought forth a protest from the Gaelic League in the name of Irish-Ireland. There are people who would also keep out all kinds of "talkies" and other instruments for the spread of English or American. Their influence is not great—many devoted supporters of the Irish language do not agree with their ideas—but they will be an embarrassment to the Minister. A book or a periodical consigned to an individual or a library will, it appears, come in free of duty, and perhaps by the time various concessions have been given to schools and Universities, the book tax may be only an evil memory.

All packages or bottles of food, drink, medicine or cosmetics pay twopence per package. Here we have confusion indeed. The wags have it that since every cube of Oxo is wrapped in paper, twopence per cube has been demanded. A real complaint is that the poor who buy in small quantities will pay a great deal more of this tax than the well-to-do. It is generally believed that substantial changes will be made by the Minister and by the Dail, or that some scheme will be devised for examination of tariffs after their imposition.

Our position at Ottawa is still uncertain. Apart from law and usage and written agreements, the essence of the Commonwealth idea is general friendliness and willingness to confer. Mr. De Valera prefers letter writing. He is removing the Oath and will retain the Land Annuities in spite of the British Government's views. At no time in the Dail has he stated clearly his own view of the Treaty or of the Commonwealth, though he has set out, after his own fashion, everyone else's attitude. We have had official information this week-end that no preliminary conversations have yet taken place between our Government and the British in preparation for Ottawa. Fairs are bad, farmers are being evicted for non-payment of annuities, and if nothing comes in the way of improved trade relations with Britain, there may be a violent swing to the Left.

A TRIUMPH OF ENGLISHRY

MUCH water has flowed under the bridges since an enterprising young woman, in the role of common informer, turned on the tap some eighteen months ago. But the flood has not washed away the English Sunday as prescribed for us by the law of Moses and the Parliaments of Charles I, Charles II, and George III. Over that saints and sinners, politicians, parsons and plain men have wrangled to the point of exhaustion, and at last a harried Government must make an effort to settle the controversy. Their effort is the Sunday Entertainments Bill now before the House of Commons. This Bill embodies no principle, and makes no pretence to logic. It discriminates between virtue and vice, but not too ostentatiously. It tolerates the desecrators of the Sabbath, but mulcts them in damages to charity. It throws a sop to democracy—democracy in its most awkward form. It has safeguards for everything except common sense. It is a compromise of compromises, a veritable triumph of Englishry.

Let us look the gift horse in the mouth. Certain specified Sunday amusements are to be legalised—musical entertainments, concerts and the like, museums, picture galleries, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, and debates. The list of the sheep does not, of course, include theatres nor, as Mr. A. P. Herbert pointed out in a letter to the *Times* the other day, Sunday newspapers. But what of the Sunday cinema, which has made all the pother? The Sunday cinema is to be neither goat nor sheep, but a hybrid. In plain words, it will be allowed on certain terms. In the first place, every employee at a picture-house must be secured his weekly rest day. That is a proper condition, and if an Act of Parliament is necessary to guarantee the right, so be it. But the second condition, which relates to the payment of profits to charity, is quite another matter. The local authority is to determine whether the whole or a part of the profits of a Sunday cinematograph show is to be paid over, and these profits "shall be computed in such manner as the authority may direct." This seems to us objectionable on several grounds. It clearly makes it possible for a local authority, if it wishes, to grant a licence with one hand and take it away with the other, by simply requiring all the Sunday takings to go to charitable objects. We hold no brief for cinema proprietors. But they can hardly be expected to give performances on Sundays solely for the purpose of collecting money for hospitals, and we frankly do not see why they should be put in a class apart among profit-makers. And the objection applies to the confiscation not only of the whole of their takings, but of any portion of them.

This condition is, in fact, neither equitable nor honest. If the aim is the "protection of the Lord's Day," by discouraging Sunday amusement, then why not demand contributions to charity from the railway companies who run trips to Brighton and Blackpool, from the owners of charabancs and rowing-boats and dog-racing tracks? If it is the character of the films that is in question, as many moralists aver, then they ought surely to be prohibited altogether. It is ludicrous to pretend that the same picture can be harmless to our morals on Saturday and harmful on Sunday. It is still more ludicrous—and to any really religious person, we should have thought, shocking—to suppose that the spectator is put right with God because his sixpence or half-crown goes into a hospital fund instead of a private pocket. The Act of 1625, it is true, provided that anyone indulging in unlawful pastimes or exercises on Sunday should forfeit for each offence 3s. 4d. to the use of the poor of the parish. But there is no precedent there. That was a penalty for breaking the Sabbath; this is, in effect, a bribe for permission to break it. And for once we find ourselves in agreement with the Lord's Day Observance Society, which declares that the charity business is humbug.

But this is not the whole story. The Bill, so far as we have dealt with it, only permits Sunday opening in areas where it was permitted during the twelve months down to October, 1931—that is to say, it preserves the *status quo* in London and certain other places. For the rest of the country, a more complicated procedure is laid down. A borough or an urban district which desires Sunday opening must submit a draft order to the Home Secretary, the terms of which it has placarded and advertised. Then, after a public meeting of the electors has been held and, if necessary, a poll taken, and a majority has been secured for the Sunday opening, and the draft order has been approved by resolutions of both Houses of Parliament, the Home Secretary will make the order effective. In a rural district, any elector may object in writing to the submission of the draft order, and in that case the Home Secretary will appoint a person to hold a local inquiry and report "whether public opinion in the district appears to him to be in favour of or against" Sunday cinemas. This may have some advantage over the old proposal to proceed by private Bill. But we do not regard Sunday opening as a proper subject for "local option." We do not see why a majority of the citizens in a town or village who do not want to go to the pictures on Sunday should prevent a minority who do from going. And the introduction of this issue into local politics is likely to have deplorable effects in many places. It will not be settled by one poll. Among the Sabbatarians there are zealots who will keep it alive, in season and out of season,

> For Zeal's a dreadful Termagant
> That teaches saints to tear and rant,
> Turns meek and secret, sneaking ones
> To Rawheads fierce and Bloody-bones.

And zeal on one side will stimulate it on the other.

The Bill will presumably be carried. The Lord's Day Observance Society remain implacably hostile to it, and though we disagree with their views we are bound to respect their courage and consistency. But their president, the Attorney-General, has made a *volte face* and is one of its backers, and many of the weaker brethren may be expected to follow him. The Sunday Entertainments Act, 1932, will not, *pace* the Sabbatarians, be a milestone on England's march to Hell. It will allow some Englishmen, and forbid others, to enjoy an innocent recreation. It may amuse a Frenchman, even the most religious Frenchman, who reads it. It will encourage us in our darling vice of hypocrisy. And perhaps in 1952, or thereabouts, another compromise will take its place.

A NEW CURRENCY

1. GOOD-BYE TO GOLD.

AS a reliable measure of value gold has not "delivered the goods." Sometimes it has delivered more and sometimes less than it should. Credit has been restricted and industry has been starved whenever the new supply of gold has been short in relation to the new supply of commodities. At other times industry has been surfeited with money when new discoveries of gold have been made and exploited. It is now appreciated that whenever the value of gold in terms of commodities varies something like a revolution occurs in the distribution of the national income. When gold is dear and commodity prices fall the rentier classes benefit, but the wage-earning classes as a whole suffer, because falling prices lead to unemployment and lower wages. On the other hand, when gold is cheap and prices rise the rentier classes suffer and the entrepreneurs gain, while the wage-earners only benefit to the extent that the demand for labour brings about a rise in wages. In practice the rise in wages always lags behind the rise in prices. And the worst of it is that when monetary forces under the gold standard set up an inflationary spiral—ever-increasing purchasing power chasing ever-rising prices—the cure is never effected without setting in motion forces which set up a deflationary spiral—ever-declining consuming power chasing ever-falling prices.

It is not without significance that the gold standard apparently breaks down with every major world crisis. Great Britain, for example, has had to suspend the gold standard during the Napoleonic Wars, during the Great War, and again during the great slump. It may be difficult for our elderly bankers to appreciate that a new generation is growing up which has had more experience of what it feels like to be "off" the gold standard than "on."

To sum up: first, the nation ought never again to tolerate a currency system which does not allow its Government to be master of its own destiny. The collapse of the gold pound in the autumn of 1931 was an unforgettable lesson. The fears and speculations of foreigners, not to mention the follies of City bankers who had indulged in unwise international deposit banking and acceptance business, served to unseat the Labour Government in ignominious fashion and to bring the good name and faith of Great Britain into disrepute. We may have recovered by this time some of our old financial prestige because leadership in the financial world is so completely lacking, but there is still the consciousness abroad that we have cheated our depositors.

In the second place, the nation will never again tolerate the misery of unemployment and the attacks on wages that are inherent in the gold standard system whenever credit has to be restricted. If the national costs of production have become high in relation to world costs, the gold standard demands that money must be made dear within that country so as to reduce employment, and that employment must be reduced so as to force labour, through the fear of poverty and hunger, to accept lower wages. In other words, the gold standard effects an economic cure by inflicting human misery. And the power of inflicting misery upon the wage-earning classes by monetary forces is generally placed in the hands of representatives of the rentier classes, who gain most by the deflation. The inhumanity of this currency system has so far been recognised by the British people, being a humane race, that they were the first to give an adequate "dole" to their unemployed. America will probably be forced very soon to do likewise.

If it were not so dangerous to life and happiness the gold standard would be regarded as a fantastic practical joke. We have invested a particular metal with an entirely fictitious value because we create a mere "paper" demand for it. We pretend that it is taboo to print more currency notes or to grant more bank credit than is represented by a certain ratio to existing stocks of gold bars. Imagine it! If part of the stock of gold bars has been exported overseas, and if the maximum of the notes allowed to be issued without gold bars as backing has been reached, we are obliged by the rules of the game to tell our traders that they must stop trading so much and give up using so many notes!

Finally, we cannot as a nation afford to return to the gold standard if we have no guarantee of its sound management. The system no longer works automatically. Even the most staunch supporters of the gold standard admit that it will have to be a managed system to a much greater extent than it has ever been in the past. It was even suggested that provision will have to be made to lower the gold ratios now required of Central Banks if the supply of the metal runs short. But who is to make these delicate adjustments? The system can no longer be managed solely by Great Britain, because America and France have two-thirds of the world's stock of gold. The old gold standard worked moderately well before the war, not only because of the increase in output from the South African mines, but because it was primarily a sterling standard and was managed by Great Britain, which invented the rules and applied them. Thus, whenever Great Britain had a surplus on her international account, she did not require her debtors to discharge the debt in gold. She even maintained "free trade" so as to allow the debts to be repaid in goods. It is quite certain that Great Britain will never be allowed to run the gold standard system as she did before the war. I conclude that it is unsafe to return to a system whose management lies in foreign, and perhaps unskilled, hands.

We have now a rare opportunity to insulate ourselves against future shocks of the gold standard by creating a new paper currency system of our own. This may be regarded as a bold adventure, but there is no reason why the experiment should not now be attempted. The exchanges are in a state of flux. The world no longer operates upon a universal monetary basis. There is no world price for any world commodity. To launch a new currency system at the present time should therefore create the least possible disturbance to the world's economic system. And because trade is universally so depressed, because the custom of Great Britain is so important, many countries, anxious to trade with us, will follow sterling, so that we have a better chance now than at any previous time of making a new currency adventure a success. In the interests of our own business men and workers we certainly ought to try, and if we are successful we shall go far to end the world trade slump by raising world commodity prices.

To work out a new monetary system we must have a clear view of our main objective. It will be generally agreed that we want to secure for our currency a constant purchasing power. We want to avoid the unpleasant redistributions of wealth which are brought about when the pound becomes cheap or dear in terms of commodities. When we say that the pound should have a constant purchasing power we mean that it must buy approximately the same quantities of commodities and services year after year. What better index of purchasing power can we have than a group of commodities and services each taken at an agreed price, which we will call 100? The standard of a composite commodity price index is the most accurate standard of value that could be devised. As compared with that of a single commodity such as gold, it is as light compared with darkness. The calculation of the composite index number which serves to define the price level is open to universal inquiry and verification. The only matter for discussion is as to what commodities should be included in the index number and how they should be weighted. Further, there is the choice between wholesale and retail prices. I do not venture to express an opinion on such a technical point, but I would suggest that a small committee of our leading statisticians and economists be formed

to decide on the best composite commodity price index for the job. Perhaps the learned experts will make an analysis of the groups of commodities and services on which the national income is spent, and weight the items of the composite price index number according to this percentage distribution of the national expenditure.

The internal management of a paper currency based upon a commodity price index number is no more difficult than the internal management of the gold standard. Instead of watching gold reserves, the Governor of the Bank of England watches the monthly fluctuations in the price level as disclosed by the index number. The pound to-day is, of course, too dear—it buys more commodities and services than we think it ought to buy. How to cheapen the pound is the problem which must be discussed, but for the moment let us assume that the pound has been established at its agreed purchasing power, which is represented by 100 in the composite price index number. If the index number falls appreciably in one month the Bank of England takes steps to increase the supply of currency. Whenever the index number rises appreciably it takes steps to contract the supply of currency. The measures it adopts for this purpose are various. If the movement in the index number is only slight the Bank may resort to a change in its discount rate and to open market operations in the orthodox manner, i.e., lowering the Bank rate and buying Government securities when it wishes to expand credit, and raising the Bank rate and selling Government securities when it wishes to contract credit. If the movement in prices is more protracted and pronounced, indicating some serious disequilibrium in the economic structure of the country, other measures will have to be taken. This brings me to the most important part of a managed paper currency—that to preserve a constant purchasing power for the pound the right balance must be maintained between spending and saving.

Mr. Keynes argues this point elaborately in his *Treatise on Money*. It seems to be largely a matter of wages. If, for example, an engineering firm manufacturing tools cheapens its costs of production by some technical invention and does not raise the wages of its employees, its profit ratio is increased and eventually higher dividends are paid to its shareholders. This induces speculation in the company's shares on the Stock Exchange and attracts the company promoters, who float new companies to engage in this particular tool manufacturing business, where profits are so attractive for speculative investors. Thus we soon arrive at a point where capital is being restored faster than it is being consumed. In other words, expenditure on investment goods has increased at a greater pace than expenditure on consumption goods. Now if this disequilibrium were applied to the industry of the whole nation it would mean under-consumption and over-saving, so that prices would fall and a slump would ensue. Under the rules of the pre-war gold standard an attempt would then be made to relieve this trade depression by the process of deflation, i.e., by a lowering of wages to reduce costs in order to keep pace with the fall in prices. But this is exactly the wrong process to secure the restoration of the balance. The right process would be to increase wages in order to enlarge consuming power. Contrariwise the right process to reverse inflation is to lower wages and to bring about less consuming power.

It is therefore clear that in order to maintain a constant purchasing power for the new paper pound there must be a State regulation of industry, by which each improvement in the efficiency of production would go to increase wages as well as to increase dividends, so that the proportions of the profits of industry taken by entrepreneur and wage-earner remain the same. How the new paper pound will fit in the world economic system and how the level of prices is to be raised in this country are subjects which will be considered next week.

E. H. DAVENPORT.

A LONDON DIARY

I DO not remember ever hearing of a worse case of judicial injustice than the Scottsboro case which is now agitating a good many people in the United States. Last year in Alabama, at Scottsboro, eight negro boys, of whom the youngest was thirteen and the eldest twenty, were sentenced to death. After appeal the sentence on seven of them has been upheld by the Alabama State Supreme Court, and now apparently nothing stands between them and the execution of the sentence but an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The facts appear to be as follows. Some white boys were in a car on a freight train when some negro boys climbed into their car. The whites objected and a fight resulted in which they got the worst of it and were ejected. They telephoned up the line and at the next station the train was stopped, searched by armed men, and nine negro boys removed from various cars. Also two white boys in the train were discovered to be really white girls. Both girls, when questioned, denied having been molested by the negros and both were prostitutes; they later on came forward and gave evidence that the negro boys had raped them. Such is the evidence and such the charge upon which these negroes have been condemned to death.

* * *

The Communist Party claims to have trebled its membership in this country during the last few months. That it should still not number more than 9,000 in days when every kind of "revisionist" Socialism is in the deepest doldrums is a further illustration of the English antipathy to all logical systems of thought. England has, however, at least one able exponent of the pure philosophy of Marxism. Mr. Maurice Dobb's pamphlet *On Marxism To-day*, published by the Hogarth Press, is a very cogent piece of work, and I am intrigued to find in his comments on Mr. Rowse's *Politics and the Younger Generation* the beginnings of the type of Marxian controversy that has been so familiar on the Continent. Mr. Dobb does not use the adjectives about Mr. Rowse that Lenin used about Kautsky, but his contemptuous irony at the expense of a "revisionist" Marxian is in the best tradition. In the present state of the world Mr. Dobb may fairly claim that Communists have a better right than anyone else to say "I told you so." He naturally refers with some contempt to the League's behaviour in regard to war in the Far East. I believe an increasing number of people everywhere are coming to the conclusion that war is again a certainty in the near future unless some quite new kind of active resistance to it can be internationally organised. A group of men and women who hold this view are organising a war resistance congress at Geneva next July—they include Einstein, Barbusse, Gorky, Upton Sinclair, Romain Rolland, Mrs. Sun Yat Sen, Theodore Dreiser and Don Passos—a forcible set of names. I agree with them that armament rings are just as much a menace as they were in 1914, and that "no free-thinking man can remain passive in front of this new danger of a gigantic world war." They add: "Do not let us hear the reproach later that we did not understand in time the danger before us." I take it that the resistance they contemplate will not be confined to passing resolutions in favour of peace.

* * *

Les Secrets de la Censure pendant la Guerre (Editions des Portiques) is a book that I hope will be translated. The authors, Marcel Beyer and Paul Allard, were press censors, and they let out a quantity of interesting facts about the manufacture of public opinion in France during the war. In each country censorship was at first justified on the ground that it was necessary to prevent the publication of information which would be useful to the enemy, and it was then found that its most important function was to "uphold morale." Very odd things were done in the name of morality in France, and not quite the same things that were done in England. The French press, for instance, was

not allowed to indulge in sensational stories about German atrocities and, especially, about German offences against women and children. They were not, as a rule, permitted to paint fantastic pictures of Germany's inevitable doom. The French took the very sensible view that the war would last a long time, and that the French public should be prepared for prolonged hardships. But the gospel of hate and fight-to-the-last-man-and-last-penny was even more rigidly kept up than in England. No paper was allowed to mention peace unless preceded by the adjective "victorious," and *L'Œuvre*, always *méchant*, came out with the following "daily motto": *After the night comes the day, After War comes . . .*[*word banned by the censorship*]. In the early days censorship was somewhat unsubtle. No reference was to be made to the cold weather or the winter of 1916, "as it would remind people of the shortage of coal." One day a chimpanzee escaped from the Paris Zoo and found refuge in the garden of the Elysée Palace. The censors were instructed by the Ministry of the Interior to suppress "every reference—*even in the most respectful form*—to the chimpanzee's meeting with Madame Poincaré."

* * *

There were two periods—the Briand and the Clemenceau regimes. During Briand's rule Clemenceau used his *Homme Enchaîné* very much as Northcliffe used the *Daily Mail*—to criticise the war administration. Just as Great Britain solved the difficulty by making Northcliffe Minister of Propaganda, so France solved it by giving power to Clemenceau, whom the censors regarded as "the most dangerous defeatist of all." In office he remained more tolerant to political criticism than Briand, but he had, as he said, "a few little ideas of his own" about censorship. Under his regime news was distorted rather than suppressed. A fortnight before Caillaux's arrest the newspapers were instructed to say nothing against Caillaux, but only to reproduce *every German article favourable to him*. One of the authors of the book describes how he "passed" an unusually virulent article by Maurice Barrès on the "partition" of Germany after the Allies' victory. This happened at the end of 1914, just at the time when Germany, disappointed in the war, might well have agreed to an "honourable" peace. The Barrès article came just in time to stir up new aggressive (or defensive) energy in Germany. It was reproduced by every German paper and had a marked effect in stopping all peace talk. "I had an uncomfortable feeling," says the censor, "that if it had not been for my carelessness the war might have ended in 1915."

* * *

An economist was talking to me the other day about the way in which the world's trade was being strangled by the attempts of each nation to save itself by currency restrictions and tariffs. It reminded him, he said, of the story of the first-aid candidate who was asked what he would do if he found a man bleeding copiously from a wound in the scalp. The candidate answered: "I would put a tourniquet round his neck." CRITIC.

COMMON SENSE EXPANDS

A WRITER in the *Times* makes the bold affirmation that where science and common sense are in conflict science is always right. This is obviously true only if we use "science" in the best meaning of the word and "common sense" in the worst. Science speculates as well as proves, and in its speculations there is abundant room for error. Common sense, on the other hand, is based partly on the universal knowledge of mankind, partly on observation, partly on tradition and partly on submission to the generally accepted opinions of eminent men. In so far as it is based on the universal knowledge of mankind—telling us, for example, that sleep is necessary to health and a thousand other obvious things—it is in as impregnable a position as science itself. In so far as it is based on observation and tradition, however, as in the once widespread assumption that the earth was more or less flat, it is clearly fallible. Observation, even when millions of people agree in observing the same things, may be blind to some vital fact that will upset the theory founded on such facts as are observed. Thus, apparently, the ancients did not observe the fact that the hull of a disappearing ship vanished before the masts, or, if they did observe it, they did not connect it with the other facts they observed in regard to the shape of the earth. Apart from this, there was little practical need in those days for any but a flat earth theory. It worked admirably for the mass of the earth's inhabitants for centuries.

As soon, however, as a man of original genius noticed from a cliff that he could still see the masts of a disappearing ship when he could no longer see the hull, common sense told him that there must be a reason for this. And in the end the most learned of mankind came to the conclusion that it could be explained only on the assumption that the earth was not nearly so flat as it seemed. The conclusion shocked the orthodox, but it was not common sense, but obstinate adherence to tradition, that impelled them to hold out against it. Common sense demanded that they should either give a more reasonable explanation of the disappearing hull than that of the men of science or that they should admit that the earth was round or at least curved. Common sense did in fact triumph to such an extent that, even in the Dark Ages in which I grew to boyhood, the rotundity of the earth had got into the very school-books. I am not sure exactly how round the earth is now supposed to be, but I doubt if science itself can ever make it flat again. If it does, I will upon due consideration fall in with the men of science. That is my notion of common sense.

We have seen a similar somersault turned by common sense in the matter of the earth's motion round the sun. Man's common sense tells him that the sun rises and sets, and in this his common sense is right. It drew the natural but false conclusion from this, however, that the sun daily moved from East to West over a motionless earth, and that it existed solely for the purpose of giving light and warmth to the inhabitants of one small planet. It is an admirable theory, poetic and gratifying to the most self-important of the animals. Practically, if not in theory, most of us still live on the assumption that it is true. There is nothing that offends our common sense in the allusions of the old geocentric poets to the rising and setting of the sun, and I fancy most poets are still geocentric in their literary astronomy. As for man's being the centre of the universe, few of us have even advanced so far as this broad-minded theory. The majority of politicians, far from believing that the human race is the centre of the universe, believe that their own particular nation is the centre of the universe, for which the sun, the moon and the stars were made, or, rather evolved. And we are all politicians.

I forget how Copernicus—if it was he—pushed the earth out of her place of honour in the universe; but he pushed her out so effectively that the submissive millions of civilised mankind now agree that he was right, though few of them could tell you why. Common sense tells us that he must have a good reason for rolling the earth round the sun, since no one in possession of the facts contradicts him. Few of us, I imagine, having left school, could prove to a child that the earth goes round the sun, or even that it rotates on its axis. We accept the conclusions of the men of science without knowing how they were arrived at. In theological matters, this has often been denounced as superstition and submission to authority. Even so, common sense bids us in our ignorance to submit.

Until recently the ordinary man has had little difficulty in understanding the conclusions of science, even if he has known nothing of the proofs that make them certainties.

There is little in the rotundity of the earth or its rotation on its axis to puzzle the imagination. Recently, however, science has got a little—nay, leagues—beyond us. Its proofs are as bewildering to the understanding as the prose of Miss Gertrude Stein, and even its conclusions take us upon flights into regions where the brain staggers. Still, we go grimly on, agreeing, and agreeing, and agreeing with things that mean scarcely more to us than abracadabra. Common sense tells us that Einstein can do no wrong. He has narrowed our universe into a little, finite ball, and has robbed us of those infinite spaces of which the human imagination in its splendour dreamed. He has added new and not beautiful words to a dictionary that was already over-full. Yet such is our common sense that in his own lifetime we have crowned him as a king of knowledge. Common sense a few centuries ago might have burned him as a heretic.

All this goes to prove that common sense itself expands like Sir James Jeans's universe. But, while common sense accepts relativity and the possibility of an expanding universe, I do not think that it is yet quite ready to accept the view that the universe can expand without having something to expand into. If we abolish infinity of space and yet leave the universe with an infinite capacity for expansion, common sense tells us that infinity has not yet been entirely abolished. On this point I find myself in the same boat with Lord Olivier and others who have been interrogating Sir James Jeans in the *Times*. Common sense tells us in our present ignorance that room is space, and that, if there is infinite room in which to expand, there must be infinite space. Though I hold this opinion, however, I hold it without bigotry. I can grasp neither infinity nor the new substitute for infinity; but, if all the mathematicians and astronomers declare that they can understand Sir James's theory and agree with it, common sense will bid me throw my common sense to the winds and incorporate his theory into my large Bible of scientific superstitions. But sometimes I wonder whether my common sense, though capable of expansion, is capable of infinite expansion. Sometimes I feel that, under the influence of science, it is expanding so enormously and so unnaturally that like the frog that tried to blow itself into the size of a bull, it will burst. Y. Y.

THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

IN the ever-changing history of British farming, legislation plays no more than a small part. On the whole it has probably done harm rather than good. The wheat quota and the sugar-beet subsidy, for example, will not atone for the Corn Production Act, conceived in haste and shapen in expediency. Whatever the results of the wheat quota, and I have a greater belief in it than is popular in these pages, it will be hard to defend the sugar-beet subsidy when all suitable areas are under corn. "Sir William Wheat" should help the grower without penalising the consumer—witness the case of Switzerland, where cheap bread and State-aided farmers exist side by side—but the cream of the sugar-beet subsidy goes to clever financiers, and farmers get no more than what is left. You will travel far, now that the wheat quota is established, to find a completely disinterested supporter either of sugar from sugar beet, or the subsidy that makes cultivation possible,

British farming is inured to crisis, and while perhaps ninety-nine per cent. of our agriculturists pause in their task to ask the Government of the day what they propose to do about it, one per cent. devises new methods with which to meet changed conditions. In the past ten years several farmers who are of the type that does not brook defeat have evolved new systems or adopted the systems of other countries to meet their needs. Certain names leap to the pen: George Baylis, Christopher Turnor, Geoffrey Nevile, Alfred Harvey Brown, A. J. Hosier, and Mr. Dudley; each in his way has demonstrated the futility of a policy of despair and has shown that there is profit as well as life in British farming. The greatest fault of our agriculturists is an innate conservatism.

In the years when I was a student of farm work, before I owned an acre of land, I knew men in different parts of England who, though they had never met one another and were farming different propositions, had the same method. They knew every field on their holdings; they could tell you where the soil was thin or fat, where a dry summer would be helpful or harmful, where the land would bake and where it would become waterlogged, and they all aimed at an unrelated production based upon the direct sale of everything grown on the land. They complained of leases that restricted the practice, and as bad times grew worse they took more and more out of mother earth and returned less until, where the land was firmly held, they ran it out. The father of one of my old farming friends paid forty-five pounds an acre for a holding, and when his son died the farm was sold for twelve pounds an acre, and was worth less. Yet that man worked from Monday morning to Saturday night, and his Sunday recreation was a walk over the land. "I don't believe in 'em an' I can't afford 'em," he said briefly when I pointed out to him the advantages of a tractor, "nasty owd contraptions to my thinkin'." He never knew what he could afford even in good times; he did not know what act of husbandry paid best, for, though just in all his dealings, he kept no accounts.

At the other end of the scale are what may be called the modernists. Mr. Nevile, of Wellingore, and Mr. Dudley, of Linkenholt, are outstanding types. Engineers as well as agriculturists, careful book-keepers and far-sighted men, they have introduced what is sometimes called arable prairie farming. They have adapted the American methods; with caterpillar tractors, big disc harrows, harvester threshers, dryers and the rest, they have revolutionised our home corn production. I am quite convinced that in a good year they can raise wheat to pay them at 35s. a quarter, though the harvester thresher is no respecter of the straw and its use for thatching is lost. But labour and loss of grain are reduced to a minimum by these methods, which are not yet beyond the possibility of improvement; more and more land will become suitable for treatment and the only thing to go will be the small field. Mr. Nevile can face a twenty-acre field, Mr. Dudley prefers a larger one. Sound farmers will see to it that we have sufficient hedgerows for our insect-eating birds, but many that will be grubbed up in the next few years will contain nothing more valuable than rabbits and rats. We shall lose some of the beauty of the English countryside on arable lands—it is a loss that none should minimise; but the hedgerows will but follow the stately homes of England, whose landlords may be said to have maintained them hitherto. There is a rising outcry against the prairie farming: we are told it will depopulate the countryside. This is not so. "The horse-team plough is as obsolete as the bow and arrow," remarked Dr. J. B. Orr, of the Rowett Institute, when I was talking to him of old and new farming, not long ago, and in that brief remark he crystallised the facts. It is the horse team that will empty the land; the pioneers of arable prairie farming are showing us how to produce cheap food and thereby to raise more milk, beef and mutton. The great danger before agriculturists is to think that the last word has been said; all that has happened is that certain methods have become inadequate.

We can turn from corn to milk and what is known as the Hosier system, under which cows are kept in the open from January to December and milked in movable "bails." I have no space here to deal with the details of the method, but on a herd of sixty milking cows Mr. A. J. Hosier, farming in the rather inhospitable neighbourhood of Marlborough downs, claims to be able to save £500 a year. His milking herd runs into hundreds, and being a practical man

he is content with sound utility animals with a yield of about 600 gallons. He grows a considerable part of his own food, using modern tractors and working double shifts. Mr. Nevile tells me that in Wellingore his men sometimes drive the tractors with acetylene lamps on them and in a country where the farm labourer's wage is round about thirty shillings no man takes less than two pounds. He is not concerned with milk; but Mr. Hosier could sell to the United Dairies and make a profit. He has now turned his attention to chickens and devised a system, which I hope to investigate in the near future, by which the birds are kept on open range and one man can minister to 3,000. In Lancashire, the pioneer poultry county, the limit of one able-bodied man's endeavour is said to be 1,250, and his wage is three pounds a week, say three-fifths of a penny per bird. Now that poultry production has been speeded up and competition is intense, such a development as Mr. Hosier foreshadows is not only of interest, but may be of the first importance.

The men I have named, and doubtless many another, have faced the crisis in food production and pointed the way out. Dr. Addison, son of a farmer, saw the possibilities of large-scale farming when he was Minister of Agriculture just lately, but their Lordships who merely own farms had less vision and refused their sanction. But so far as one can see, the near future will provide large farms that will be, where possible, self-contained units, with one department helping another and each in charge of an expert; and at the other end there will be smallholdings for those who like them, where men and women who will work hard for the sake of freedom and independence are content to feed themselves and sell a surplus co-operatively. If there is one fact that stands out clearly in these days of confused outlooks and diverse counsels, it is that the small farm of 150 or 200 acres is no longer an economic unit. The needs of the smallholder will produce commercial interests to cater for them while life will become easier with the spread of electrification and the passing of effective machinery from one smallholding to another.

For the old type of small farmer, industrious, obstinate, and now obsolete, the writing is on the wall. He has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. His kingdom will be divided and given to the prairie farmer and the smallholder; and with his passing a most attractive figure will disappear from a countryside it would soon have failed to recognise. Eheu fugaces! S. L. B.

Correspondence

THE KENYA LAND COMMITTEE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The article on the above subject in last week's issue of your journal is timely. As a member of the Joint Committee to which you refer I cannot too strongly emphasise the danger of allowing the existing grievances of the Kenya natives to remain unsettled much longer. The land question, in particular, is vital, and, unless it is settled to the satisfaction of the natives, unrest will grow and will put an end to all hope of an era of peaceful development in Kenya. The appointment to the Land Inquiry Committee of a European settler whose views are well known to the natives has created a bad impression among the latter. I do not know Captain Wilson, and so far as my knowledge goes he may be the fairest-minded man in creation, but in making such an appointment the psychological effect upon the natives ought to have been considered, especially as the Committee is primarily concerned with their grievances.

In the circumstances I think the suggestion of Lord Sanderson, to co-opt temporarily two natives of the tribe concerned when grievances are being discussed, an excellent one, and I trust it will be adopted. There are Kenya natives who are well fitted to sit on such a Committee, for if there is one subject they are well informed upon it is the land.

I assume that natives will be allowed to give evidence before the Committee. I mention this point because I have found, often in unexpected quarters, quite out-of-date conceptions of the intellectual attainment of the natives and of their ability to express themselves. Their development during the last thirty years has been phenomenal. It is to be hoped that the good work promised by the appointment of this Land Committee will not be checked by any narrow attitude towards the question of co-operating with the natives.

Quinton, Birmingham. WILFRED WELLOCK.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—On behalf of thousands of Kikuyu whom I represent and who have suffered greatly owing to the loss of our land, which was robbed by the Kenya Government and sold or given to white settlers, I wish to record our appreciation of the article on the Kenya Land Commission which appeared in your issue of 21st inst. As an African I can say that the points raised in the article are quite true.

Among Africans the Commission is viewed with great alarm and suspicion and mistrust, because it consists of interested people and because Africans are not represented on it. Therefore English people must not be surprised if Africans will not see the Commission. As the article suggests, we are afraid of having more land taken from us, and if Africans will see the Commission at all they will avoid putting forward the case of land thefts in the past, in case they have more taken from them in the future. Africans are claiming their own lands which were taken from them by the Kenya Government and sold or given to white settlers. Thus the robbers and buyers of stolen properties are the people who are going to conduct an inquiry into land which has been taken from us and on which they are living. In these circumstances I am afraid we cannot see how these people are going to be willing to expose themselves.

I have lived in England for some time and I know how English people demand right and justice in their own country. I believe that all progressive people in England will realise that Africans, as human beings, are entitled to the same right and justice in their own country. If such a Commission were appointed to deal with English questions and interested people were elected to serve on it, no one would take the trouble to appear before it, but where black people are concerned it appears that there is a different standard. The time has now come when Africans must be given a chance of representing themselves and be allowed to express their opinions in all matters affecting them. They must not be regarded as mere children who must have guardians to speak for them.

Sometimes I wonder if Africans can expect to have justice at all from Englishmen, and I am therefore glad when a paper like THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION stands up for equal justice for Africans and English people. J. KENYATTA,
General Secretary, Kikuyu Central Association.
95 Cambridge Street, S.W.1.

THE LAW AND PREJUDICE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I cannot venture to ask you to allow me to discuss Mr. Lowe's letter with the fullness it deserves. But if any reader is interested in our differences may I ask him to look, on workmen's compensation, at Sir E. Parry's *Gospel and the Law*, pp. 111–150, and on what the inferences drawn from *Lumley v. Gye* did to Trade Unions, in interesting contrast to those drawn in the *Mogul* case for a great capitalist combination, at Professor E. Jenks' admirable account in his *Short History of English Law*, pp. 325–7. I refer to these because neither of the writers is committed to the view I expressed about the "inarticulate major premiss" of the judge. HAROLD J. LASKI.

Devon Lodge,
Addison Bridge Place, W.14.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I deeply regret that your reviewer's quite justifiable admiration for Bishop Berggrav's book, *The Prisoner's Soul*, should have led him into an expression of approval of solitary confinement. Because a man of such power and penetration as Bishop Berggrav should have failed to appreciate the evils of the

solitary system—perhaps because, as an official, he has been too close to it—that is no reason why we should reject our hundred years' accumulated experience in this country that the shutting of a man away from his fellow men, week after week, year after year, is thoroughly bad. That experience has led to the complete abolition of solitary confinement in this country. Coleridge's words are as true to-day as when he wrote them :

> As he went through Cold Bath Fields, he saw
> A solitary cell ;
> And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
> For improving his prisons in Hell.

I have been in Bishop Berggrav's prison in Oslo, where men work alone in their cells, exercise alone in solitary court yards, and sit in church in a cubicle within sight of the priest but out of sight of each other. I have also been in the other prison in Oslo, where prisoners are associated together under conditions which leave much to be desired. The strong side of the Norwegian prison system lies rather in the kindly humanity which is characteristic of Norwegians than in their methods.

A study of the prisons of various countries suggests that both the solitary system and the association system are open to grave objection, and perhaps the right conclusion to arrive at is that any prison system is likely to create such difficulties that prison ought to be the last resort in our treatment of crime.

Parliament Mansions, S.W.1. E. ROY CALVERT.

HONOUR WHERE IT IS DUE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I feel that all fair-minded persons, whatever may be their political convictions, will agree that in certain sections of the British press a discreditable attempt has been made to minimise and disparage the magnificent achievement of the Russian oil tanker *Sovietskaia Neft* in saving the lives of 410 passengers and crew from the blazing French liner *Georges Philippar*.

The first reports of the disaster announced that several British ships were racing to the rescue. Then we were told that they had succeeded in saving in all some 300 persons. Incidentally, it was mentioned that about 400 survivors were believed to be on board a Russian ship.

Subsequently, the press informed us that attempts had been made to communicate with the Russian ship, but that no reply could be obtained, as they understood apparently neither English nor French.

One newspaper even went as far as to state that grave fears were entertained regarding the survivors, as the Russian tanker carried provisions only for a crew of twenty, and that these would not last those on board for more than two days. It was suggested also that the fire had been caused by Russian Communists under instructions from Moscow ; but this hypothesis was speedily discredited by the shipping company as well as by the Sûreté Générale in Paris.

The true story finally became known. The *Sovietskaia Neft* came on the scene many hours before any rescuer, British or otherwise, could join her. She stood by—as near as her own perilously inflammable cargo permitted. In the great heat of the tropics the little crew of twenty worked for hours on end, with courage and devotion—for, with the flames gaining ground, minutes and even seconds were precious—and saved 410 lives !

Let us admire them as men even if we do not approve of their system of government !

23 Queensborough Terrace, W.2. G. A. HINKSON.

FRANK HARRIS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have read Richard Sunne's notice of H. K. Lunn's book on Frank Harris. As far as it is concerned with me, it is quite accurate. For a period of about a year I was completely infatuated by Frank Harris. But it is quite untrue that Katherine Manfield was. On the contrary, from the beginning she was intensely critical of him ; and, no doubt, if she had not been tender towards *my* infatuation, she would have been more critical still. She mistrusted him from their first meeting, and had a very poor opinion of his stories. The only book of his that she admired was *The Bomb*.

My own infatuation came to an abrupt end when I discovered that a story published by him in *The English Review* had been taken bodily from a story by Stendhal. Shortly after that, he peremptorily summoned me to become a director of *Hearth and Home*. Then I really smelt a rat, and refused—but in fear and trembling.

But one act of his, for me, washes out all his blackguardism. Once, discovering that I was very hard up, he gave me, spontaneously, two five-pound notes—he never seemed to carry anything smaller. I had the pleasure, before he died, when he was hard up in Nice, of repaying them. But I have always cherished the belief that there was a streak of real generosity in him. And after all, wasn't Frank Harris superior to the financial magnates whom he fleeced ? But perhaps H. K. Lunn's book, which I have not read, will show that this also is an illusion. I must confess that I have never been able to feel any indignation about him, except for one thing : the way in which he ruined Dan Rider, the bookseller, one of the largest-hearted little men in all London at that time, and, I hope, at this time also.

Larling, nr. Norwich. J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

FICTION AND THE READING PUBLIC

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Since Mr. Sadleir has again occupied a great deal of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION with misleading comment on my book I must again ask you to print my reply. I shall be briefer than he.

He finds me naïve. I find him (to select the most urbane of the words that come to hand) cool. He confesses that he misrepresented the purpose of my book so grossly as to evoke protest from a disinterested third party, but suggests that I ought to have been grateful for such " commendation " as he condescended to give me. It is true that (after offering an apology) he goes on to argue that misrepresentation was not misrepresentation. He is answered sufficiently when I say (what he cannot dispute) that no one could have gathered from his review that *Fiction and the Reading Public* is not a " history of the best-seller " but " an examination of typical best-sellers to be used as an index of the cultural level of classes and ages."

This point, I can hope, he will grasp : he will perhaps allow that I have some excuse for my ingratitude. But I can hardly hope any longer that he will really understand my objection to his review. For he still seeks to discredit my work by asserting (with no more evidence than before) that I am woefully lacking on the side of fact. Why I am not grateful for the facts (already known to me) that he continues to flourish I cannot put more simply than I did in my last letter. Some facts were relevant to my purpose and some were not. Not being able to understand my purpose, Mr. Sadleir cannot understand my ingratitude.

I say " not being able to understand my purpose " ; for Mr. Sadleir's remarks on my third section point irresistibly to that conclusion. I repeat that I show there " in detail, by analysis, why one novel can be said to be better than another." It is open to Mr. Sadleir to point out in what ways he finds my judgments insufficiently grounded ; but if he persists in alleging that I rely upon mere assertion I can only in charity conclude that he is uninterested (shall I say ?) in literary criticism. If to him a conviction that " preferences " are important is indistinguishable from a desire to belong to a " pharisaical minority," then naturally he cannot understand the aim of my book. And naturally he thinks it amusingly presumptuous that one should expect a concern for literary criticism in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

Mr. Sadleir's offer of help with facts is generous. I should have been more impressed if he had shown any understanding of what a relevant fact is. And I will conclude by remarking that the distinction he offers me between G. W. M. Reynolds and Northcliffe he might have found in my own book.

Cambridge. Q. D. LEAVIS.

[This letter was unavoidably held over from our last issue. The correspondence is now closed.—ED. N.S. & N.]

SIXTY YEARS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am always very grateful to your dramatic critic for his kindly remarks about my work, but in his article about *She Stoops to Conquer* he credits me with " Sixty years on the Stage." As such a long record might frighten managers and film producers, I'd be still more grateful if you'd correct that statement. My length of days on the stage is forty-two years. And quite enough, too !

Green Room Club, W.C. FEWLASS LLEWELLYN.

Miscellany

AMERICAN STUDENTS AND KENTUCKY GUNMEN

[The author of this article is Mr. G. Carritt, of Christ Church, Oxford. He is now a graduate student of Columbia University and was a member of the student delegation whose expedition to Kentucky he describes.]

THE rising student movement in the United States that prompted the student delegation of the National Student League to make an expedition to the Kentucky coal fields is of some significance. This delegation was composed of eighty students, representatives from New York colleges, from Harvard, Smith, Cincinnati and Tennessee Universities. On March 23rd, 1932, the first bus left the Columbia campus on an expedition to investigate as impartial students the economic and social conditions of a striking industry. They went, moreover, to verify for themselves the rumours of a reign of terror conducted against the miners, who had been on strike for five months. They also took money to buy food for the needy families. The expedition was financed and led by themselves; it was supported unofficially by several outstanding members of the faculties and other public men.

As the students approached the Kentucky border, it became apparent that the threatening manifestos issued by the coal operators and the district attorneys of the Kentucky counties were not mere threats. At Knoxville, Tennessee, twenty miles from the Kentucky border, the students halted for a night before passing into Kentucky. Here, they were watched by detectives and besieged by press reporters. The hotel where they had intended to put up would not receive them. In view of this, and of the beating up given to Theodore Dreiser's delegation of writers a few weeks previously, and of the threatening letters of the officials, attempts were made to secure an injunction for safety from the Governor of Kentucky, but next morning the students left without this. They took with them from this point two miners of the National Miners' Union who had come over the border to guide them back to the mining camps. This fact refutes the statement later made by the officials of Kentucky to the press that the miners themselves were hostile to the students.

As the bus approached Cumberland Gap, the mountain pass into Kentucky, it was surrounded by cars. The bus turned the corner over the boundary as it was growing dark, and was confronted by a mob of two hundred men and a blockade of cars which had been waiting for nine hours. Without asking permission, District Attorney Smith and Attorney Cleon Calvert entered the bus, and began questioning the students. Their own spokesman got out to tell the crowd their peaceful purpose. But the crowd, who were swarming all round, were highly excited and refused to give him a hearing. There were derisive cat-calls and cries of "Fetch 'em out!" "String 'em up!" District Attorney Smith again entered the bus and called out the miners, who were angrily received outside. He then read a speech in which he called the students Yankees, aliens, and agitators, denied that they were students, and said that they were sent by revolutionists. He demanded their return. The students refused, and since it was dark and the crowd was unruly, Smith packed the bus with armed deputies and conducted the students to the court house of Middlesbro "to investigate" as he said "the investigators."

In a court house, crammed with agents of the operators, who were excited with drink, and from whose pockets guns protruded, Smith proceeded to hold, with the assistance of Judge van Beber, an informal and illegal investigation. The students sat on benches before the desk on which Smith lolled. The town girls and boys sat on this desk behind him, smoking and grimacing. The students' leader asked if they were under arrest; if they were not, they refused to answer; if they were, they demanded a lawyer. Smith said, "Very well, you can wait for your lawyer in jail." The students repeated individually the leader's answer: "If that's the way you do things in Kentucky, we will go to jail rather than surrender our rights." Smith again incited the crowd to hostility by dwelling on the Semitic names of some students, and by insinuating they were not bona fide students. "You have sounded your trumpets," he said, "on the specious claim of liberty of free speech and free press. Your self-constituted, uninvited commission comes here on your claim of right and protection to wield your alien propaganda. We interpose our rights vested in our property, churches, and sacred institutions." The speech brought calls and sneers against the students from the mob. Women and men pressed round the benches again shrieking "Fetch 'em out!" "String 'em up!" One press reporter who had experienced negro lynchings afterwards said Judge Lynch was close at hand that moment. Having worked up the crowd, Smith demanded that the students should return and obey the law of Kentucky—the law being, in this instance, as he asserted, whatever he chose to say.

The court house mob that forced the students back to their bus and out of Kentucky State were hired agents and not Kentuckians. There was a minority of miners whose sympathies were with the students, but they were unarmed and dared not expose themselves by protesting. Miners are under continual threat of imprisonment, since to belong to the National Miners' Union is a sufficient reason to be charged with criminal syndicalism in a Kentucky court.

On the return journey, under the enforced escort of two attorneys and three armed deputies, one of the deputies twisted a girl's arm until it almost broke, for disobeying orders; another knocked down a student who interceded. This man, who drew a revolver on the students, had two days previously been indicted for the murder of two union miners operating a union soup-kitchen. His acquittal was arranged. In the back of the bus, another deputy, the worse for drink, was swaggering with a pistol. While he played with it, he dropped several dum dum bullets, which the students later produced as evidence. Their insolence was expressed by one, who said, "What I say goes in Kentucky. I would as soon shoot now a United States Marshal between the eyes as I shot at Germans in the war." These deputies, in spite of protest, escorted the bus over the boundary for six miles into Tennessee, refusing to allow the driver to stop. Thus, they not only abrogated the students' rights as American citizens to enter and remain in Kentucky State, but also illegally prolonged their power as deputies beyond their own State boundary.

The students returned to Knoxville, and from there sent a car to direct the second bus that was following to enter the mines by another route. The story of the second bus was like that of the first.

The students' progress was reported fully by the New York as well as the local papers. The reports concentrated on the student character of the episode and on the petty details of the treatment they received, but were silent about the conditions of the miners and the implications of what the students saw. There were even front page reports in papers which had not mentioned the cold-blooded murder of miners for organising relief among the strikers. Realising this press policy, the students determined to arouse sentimental interest in their own activities in order to draw attention to the miners. The little they saw in Kentucky and all they experienced convinced them that there was a reign of terror, and that the operators had good reason to wish to prevent their reaching the mining camps. With this conviction, they set out to expose the league of operators and officials.

The expedition started for Washington with little of the original plans accomplished. The mining camps were not reached, the relief was not distributed. Instead they carried

a protest to the Governors of Kentucky and of Tennessee against the abrogation of their citizen rights to use inter-state federal highways, against search without warrant, against court investigation without a lawyer, and against the violence of the agents of the operators. At Washington, before Senator Costigan, who is promoting a senatorial investigation, they demanded immediate investigation of conditions. They protested against the illegal nature of the acts committed, and claimed that force was used because the operators were unwilling to let them see the conditions of starvation and terror in the coal fields. Furthermore, they asserted that neither the State Governments of Kentucky and Tennessee, nor the Federal Government at Washington, took steps to guarantee their safety from possible lynching while in the hands of the operators. The result of these protests was negative, but it emphasised again clearly the united front of State and Federal Governments with the big business of Ford and Insull that is behind the operators. Every proceeding was undertaken with one purpose, that is, to use the experience of the expedition in such a way that the silence of the press and the indifference of the public to the conditions in Kentucky may be disturbed.

The students have separated to their universities, and will speak, wherever they get a hearing, of the Kentucky terror. They are determined to return. Now for the first time American students came out of their academic shell and realised themselves as a social force.

LADY GREGORY

I FIRST met Lady Gregory when she and Mr. Yeats were beginning the great work of creating an Irish theatre and an Irish school of playwrights. To those who listened, in admiration and excitement, to the schemes then put forward the great success of the movement was one of those heart-breaking miracles when, for once, achievement is worthy of the desire and the dream. Lady Gregory's share in it is not calculable, for exceeding her talent for work and direction, her indomitable fighting spirit, her late discovered genius for writing, was her personality, her rare balance, her intellectual and moral assurance. If at times the movement was rather a whirlwind, every whirlwind has at its centre a core of stillness, and there was Lady Gregory, as undisturbed by the row about George Moore as by the row about Synge, believing indefectibly in the theatre, and knowing her own strength.

Her calmness made her a little alarming to an undergraduate; one suspected that it cloaked laughter at some of the extravagances of the ardent, talkative young men and women who met in Yeats' rooms at the back of St. Pancras church. Yet her enthusiasm, her ardour, burnt as fiercely, and her genius had a far wider range of interest than that of any save Yeats himself. While she will be remembered in history as the co-foundress of the theatre, she will be remembered in the hearts of theatre-goers and readers as the originator of one of the most enchanting varieties of that enchanting language, Anglo-Irish. Those who dislike the Kiltartan style are men whose idea of literature, however fine, is of something printed and kept in a library. Lady Gregory was as much a foe to that idea of literature as Yeats or Synge. For them, and for all great poets, literature is spoken and heard before it is written and read. Books are conveniences; at the best sacramental, not sacraments. Lady Gregory brought to her work an ear quick to retain the most sensitive variations in the speech of the peasants who were her friends; and in her plays especially she so transformed that speech that her characters bring on to the stage a liveliness, a reality, that are not often found outside great poetry. Her words are acts, and every speech is an incident. It might have been thought that the plays, so local in their setting, so Irish in their background of history, mythology or farce, would only be popular in Ireland. As it is, few countries have not laughed at *Spreading the News* or *The Workhouse Ward*; for in them Lady Gregory makes a universal appeal through individuals that can find representatives in any village community. I have seen *Hyacinth Halvey*, *Spreading the News* and *The Dragon* acted by Gloucestershire peasants for Gloucestershire audiences: the pace was strangely different from that in which the Irish players took the plays, but not a point was missed by the actors or the audience.

Lady Gregory's narrative prose, when not employed in the retelling of her country's heroic stories, was of an eighteenth-century dignity and simplicity. Again, it was naturally a spoken English: for in Ireland no one sees why spoken English should not be as fine as written English. Her last little book on her old home and its library, its past and its influence, was a wonderful piece of evocation, excellent in its craftsmanship, with that ease which can only come when authorship is a vocation rather than a profession. In that book—*Coole*—lingered something of the sorrow which descended on her on the death of her only son Robert, for whose memory Mr. Yeats wrote some of his finest lines. After that disaster Lady Gregory went through her life, still active—three years ago, when I last saw her in London, she showed little sign of her seventy-seven years—still eager, but somehow more remote; she was never out of sympathy with the friends whom she knew and whose interests were her interests, but she was becoming a little out of touch, withdrawn into that quiet of hers which it seemed indelicate to disturb.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

SIGNS IN THE GALLERIES

OPTIMISM, like fireworks, needs careful storage and sparing use. Just as rockets exploded indiscriminately create little more impression than damp squibs, and merely accentuate the darkness that overwhelms their sparks, so continual panegyric also loses its effect. It is like crying "Wolf!" the other way on, and critics as well as Chancellors of the Exchequer ought not to raise unjustifiable hopes. Although contemporary art in England has arrived at the end of a phase, which in itself was sterile though not without its lesson, it is still too early to hail a new dawn. Growing pains do not necessarily imply renaissance. But one may at least assert that the galleries are more interesting now than they were a couple of years ago; that a kind of standardised sculpture and painting, founded on impersonal scientific theory, is giving way to a much more lively expression of individual instinct.

Abstraction is ceding the place to stylistic representation. It is symptomatic that Mr. Maurice Lambert, in the foreword to his exhibition at the Lefevre Galleries, should say, "To embark on any process that is informed solely by reason is, to me, unthinkable." Reason, indeed, his work contains, in the fine logic of his craftsmanship; it is the grammar, the foundation of his art. But beyond it he projects his own impetuous spirit, to catch essential living energy in his material, to proclaim his delight in natural movement and free gesture. Sometimes the attempt is too bold for the form, but with such pieces as *Dancing Mother*, *Herring-Gulls*, *Germinating Seed* and *Hands Holding Bird* he translates quivering life directly into plastic shape. He has rescued sculpture from its static pose, and discovered a new element for its resources. With this exhibition he has fulfilled promise and entered upon secure accomplishment.

Mr. Alfred Thornton's paintings and drawings at the Warren Gallery afford a too rare opportunity of seeing the work of an artist rich in experience but unobtrusive to a fault in imposing himself upon the public. Yet the exhibition is especially opportune just now, at a turning-point in English painting, for it gives the strength of Mr. Thornton's authority in favour of individual representation. It is an eloquent example of what may be won by seeking personal expression in vital tradition, by the control and refining of

a temperament responsive to natural appearances—a born painter's temperament—and keeping theory always subservient to pure vision. Such brush drawings as *Rudge Hill*, *Bredwardine Bridge* and *The Spinney* seize the underlying rhythm of landscape with the grace and precision of classic Chinese art, though they present the very spirit of the English scene. And the oils, as in *Near Stinchcombe*, *November*, *Ifold Spinney* and *Soot*, with their grave, throbbing reds and greens and browns give the same feeling of breathing country and the intellectual harmony of nature. There is a triumphant sincerity, and a grasp of significance in the universe about such work, where colour seems the language of ripe philosophic meditation. Mr. Thornton's vision pierces towards the heart of being and the result at the same time reposes and inspirits. The exhibition should not be missed.

At the Beaux Arts Gallery, where a portion of Mr. Sickert's exhibition is still happily on view, Mrs. Granger-Taylor shows pastels which claim all the prerogative of oils. She is a real master in the medium, and reveals its unexpected capabilities. The translations of some of the Italian painters are peculiarly attractive; *Portrait Study*, *The Card Players* and *Young Connoisseurs* are finely organised and lively compositions, while one is grateful for a salting of humour which adds a tonic quality to the exhibition as a whole. At the Wertheim Gallery Miss Doris Chapman shows some African scenes which are simple and convincing and exotic flower-pieces of fine colour and admirable design. She has not, in her landscapes, altogether made up her mind between the rival claims of pattern and realism, but something should emerge later from the conflict. At the Bloomsbury Gallery Miss Mary Potter is quiet and forceful, and particularly happy in still-life. At 23, Cork Street, Miss Sheila Charles, "The youngest of the Moderns," puts the Bright Young People into bright young paint. Her costume-pieces show a prepossession for the negligé, but this thirteen-year-old artist is herself by no means negligible.

If by this time the gallery-goer desires still more art, but feels a need for material food as well, he may satisfy both hungers at the Regal Gallery in Greek Street. For here along with an excellent restaurant is a very good black-and-white exhibition to which, among others, Messrs. Eric Gill, Ravilious, Poulton, Gibbings and Stephen Bone, and Misses Hermes, Clare Leighton, Gabain, Willoughby and Agnes Parker have contributed. The restaurant-gallery has long flourished in Paris, but the food is apt to be better than the pictures; at the Regal Gallery the standard is high in both cases.

T. W. EARP.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

A Flemish Morality

MR. KOMISARJEVSKY had evidently a to-do to get Crommelynck's *Le Cocu Magnifique* across at the Stage Society last Sunday. It was not English smugness standing in the way, but rather the inability to convince an English audience of Crommelynck's seriousness Mr. Komisarjevsky, probably rightly, thought his only chance was to out-Herod Herod in the matter of burlesque and extravaganza; with the result that we had pantomime horses, a synchronised musical accompaniment, a skyscraper desk, a swan's-feather pen, an acid-flask inkpot, and a tracery of carpentry for scenery like the setting of ballet—say, *The Cat*. Yet all this only bewildered us even more. We were bidden to watch the sublimely uxorious Bruno converted to the opposite extreme of doubting his wife, the process being analysed in detail by the old classical trick of the mute friend—Estrugo, the clerk. Estrugo is Bruno's saner, credible self, even his conscience; but it was hard for us to bear with the queue in the third Act, each man waiting for "his turn" with Stella, while Bruno still refused to believe it true, and thus refused to lay certainty to his heart for relief. Mr. George Hayes, as Bruno, gave us first-rate acting; his monologues were genuinely convincing. He was well supported by Miss Peggy Ashcroft, whose Stella had rare beauty and a true emotional content.

The play is, in its Flemish mystical realism, nearer to a mystery play, a play that deals in qualities and virtues rather than in characters or types; the programme's suggested comparison with Molière and Ben Jonson was here unfortunately misleading. In that classic drama real people typify virtues or vices; in the mystery plays ideas and qualities are, for the play, clothed in flesh and blood. Perhaps this type of drama is too remote from the average Englishman's mode of thought to have a success here.

Raw Stuff

The Crowd Roars (with James Cagney) at the Regal is an extremely exciting film, dealing with motor dirt-track racing, which is conducted in a murky atmosphere of drunkenness, jealousy and intrigue. The racers rush through quarrels to death, amid the hoarse roars of the crowd, frenzied by blood, mud and speed. Cagney, who is certainly the great discovery of the last year or two, is equally impressive both in the days of his part triumph as a racer and later as a down-and-out. No other film actor has his assured and delicate touch. Even the love passages in this very raw film have a rancid humour, which is rarely to be heard on the screen. The film has, rather unexpectedly, what is, I suppose, a happy ending, though this is not affected by an inartistic softening of the characters. Crude barbarism, enflamed by the jealousy of professional record-breaking, reigns till the last moment of this film. The final smash-up in the great Indianopolis race is a fitting finale to a very exciting picture. *The Crowd Roars* is one of the few pictures I have ever seen which is not sentimental. Some have called it "demoralising." Truthful would, I think, be a better word. But, to be sure, the two epithets are not contradictory.

Ballet

All who have found excitement and entertainment in the revival of ballet so finely fostered by The Camargo Society, the Vic-Wells Ballet and the Ballet Club will be glad to know that, under the combined auspices of the three societies, there is to be a season of ballet lasting four weeks. The first performance is to be on June 6th; the theatre is the Savoy; among the artists to appear are Phyllis Bedells, Frederic Ashton, Anton Dolin, Lydia Lopokova, Alicia Markova, Marie Rambert, Olga Spessiva and Ninette de Valois; the orchestra is from the London Symphony, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham or Mr. Constant Lambert. Applications for special subscription terms for the season should be made to the Secretary, 5/42, Campden House Court, W.8.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, May 27th—
Sir Arthur J. Thomson on "William Harvey," B.B.C., 7.30.

Sunday, May 29th—
J. A. Hobson on "Remaking the World," Conway Hall, 11.
Prof. P. M. Roxby on "China in the Melting Pot," B.B.C., 5.

Monday, May 30th—
Meeting arranged by the Union of Democratic Control, "Peace or War in the Far East," Livingstone Hall, 8.
Command Variety Performance, Palladium.

Tuesday, May 31st—
Leonard Barnes on "Caliban in Africa," Friends House, 1.20.
Mock Trial, London School of Economics, 5.30.
"The Land of Smiles," Dominion.

Wednesday, June 1st—
S. P. Turin on the "Second Five Year Plan," King's College, 6.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ON the 23rd of December, 1903, Arnold Bennett, who was then thirty-six years old, wrote as follows in his diary:

> I had a smooth passage over on Monday.
>
> Yesterday I saw Pinker twice and after some hesitation on his part arranged that he should pay me £50 a month certain during 1904. Pinker, and Barry Pain and I lunched together. But Pain hadn't many new stories. I heard that Mrs. Humphry Ward had £10,000 from Harpers for serial rights of *Lady Rose's Daughter*, and that the book sold 400,000 copies in America alone.
>
> Woke up this morning at 4.30. Read de Maupassant, myself, and the *Telegraph*; but couldn't sleep again until 8.30.

It would be misleading to say that this is an especially characteristic extract from the *Journal of Arnold Bennett*, 1896–1910 (Cassells, 10s. 6d.); for every entry is especially characteristic. Therein lies Arnold Bennett's particular quality. Most of us, most great men, famous men, notorious men and infamous of all ages, however characteristic they may be at moments, have long periods of mere generalness, monstrously unindividual and untypical. Bennett had no such periods; or, if he had, he kept them to himself and his God. I would not say he was always Arnold Bennett, for that would be to affirm of his character a unity that can only be found in men of rarer genius than Bennett's; he was always either himself or "Arnold Bennett," the mask made and decorated by himself, the crafty, out to impress, complete, carefully arranged imitation of a man of the world. In some of his books, written when he was tired or unwell (this Diary shows him as always struggling and without complaint against bad health), this make-up of Bennett was too much for him; and his own appearance was obscured by the too definite image of the puppet he had made in self-defence. In his better books the real Arnold Bennett, shy, sensitive, incurably inquisitive, tender and humorous, was evident enough; and in his personal life the invented Arnold Bennett was only a piece of play-acting which he produced for his friends' entertainment and for defence against the foolish and the exceptionally impercipient.

* * *

Although all artists make masks against the arrogance and stupidity of the world, Arnold Bennett had especial reason for the construction of his mask. Mr. Flower has edited this Journal excellently; I have found very few errors, though surely the dancer whose performance Bennett describes with such elaborate detail must have been Loie Fuller and not Adeline Genée. I wish, however, that he had explained the nature of Bennett's curious impediment in his speech and the effect on his character of his struggles to overcome it. Apparently it was originally an ordinary stammer; in later life when he was more at ease in Society and in command of himself (though never so much self-controlled as he seemed), it was a hesitation which, if he was weary or in uncongenial company, became a kind of suspended hiatus. He never got used to it. He told me once that one reason for his continued distress at his affliction was the unexpectedness, the unreasonableness of its incidence. I have known occasions when the arrival of a new person at the party would make him much worse; at other times the introduction of a difficult subject in conversation would have the same result. It was only rarely, to my knowledge, that Bennett would use his affliction as Lamb was said to have used his stutter to such incomparable effect, to emphasise a joke or a witty retort. I never heard Bennett admit that he did so use it; but I remember an occasion when he didn't deny that he had. It was at a dinner party. Far too many of the guests, for Bennett's taste, were authors; there was one there who had recently had a great success with a very third-rate novel, a novel in which Bennett as well as other authors had been adroitly pillaged. I was sitting beside him; we were talking, after dinner, about anything rather than the popular novelist who was throwing his weight about a bit and scarcely giving Bennett that opportunity with the company that a man of his eminence and seniority deserved. Suddenly Bennett said to me a little loudly, "Have you read ——?" naming one of Mr. X's books. I was happy to admit that I had not. "Ah," said Bennett. "He keeps bothering me to read it. I always tell him that I——" and then followed a silence so deep, so full of roguery, so evidently contrived that there was a pause in the general conversation, which even Mr. X noticed. He turned inquiringly to the sofa where Bennett and I were sitting. Bennett, apparently completely unconscious either of the inquiring silence or the condescending glance, suspended his silence—"He keeps sending me his books; but I tell him I can't read his bloody novels. If I want to I can read"—then there was another slighter pause—"my own books for myself."

* * *

This volume of the Diary takes Bennett from his twenty-ninth to his forty-third year. It is the Journal of a worker whose sympathies were always with the worker. It is possible that Bennett over-estimated the value of sheer, hard, continuous work, if his own example is a heartening one to all who believe that an artist's vocation can only be properly realised by incessant practice. Bennett combined a passion for fame with his capacity for hard work. He was not only ambitious—nearly all artists are that—he was competitively ambitious—which many artists never contrive to be. The reason for this is, I think, simple. Bennett was a man who learned to write novels, and of his own choice wrote them by a certain standard—the standard of French naturalistic fiction, the fiction, in particular, of the Goncourts, of Maupassant, of Flaubert. It is this standard which so often made him a bad critic. He would measure Dickens, for instance, not against Dickens or Shakespeare, but against the Goncourts or Henry James. He was by tradition a classical critic, treating the English novel as Addison the first English epic, or as Johnson judged the plays of Shakespeare. It is perfectly permissible to prefer, say, La Fontaine to William Blake; but it is really stupid to say that La Fontaine is better than Blake: it means nothing. And in his later life Bennett was ready to admit that this was the great flaw in classical criticism. In the period covered by this volume, however, the competitive standard is still in possession. He writes on the 27th May, 1904:

> To-day I am 37. I have lived longer than I shall live. My new series begins to appear to-day in the *Windsor*. My name is not on the cover. Anthony Hope's stands there alone. And I am 37. Comment is needless.

At the end of the next year he writes—

> During 1905 I published three books. *Tales of the Five Towns*, *The Loot of Cities*, and *Sacred and Profane Love*. The latter went slowly into a second edition and was also published by Tauchmitz. It appeared serially in *To-day* and the second serial rights were bought by Tillotson's. I wrote:
>
> 1. The 2nd and 3rd parts of *Sacred and Profane Love*.
> 2. *The City of Pleasure*, a 60,000 serial for Tillotson's.
> 3. The first 30,000 of *Whom God Hath Joined*.
> 4. Eight or ten short stories all about the Five Towns.
> 5. A new series of *savoir-vivre* articles for *T.P.'s Weekly* which began on December 1st, also some articles for the *New Tribune*.
> 6. A little French play in two acts, translated by Davray. Title *Que Faire*.
>
> My total of words was slightly over 200,000, much less than usual, but then I took two months clear holiday in the summer. On the whole not a satisfactory year. A genuine success seems as usual to delay and postpone itself. But I find that I am much less interested in money than Phillpotts and Wells.

Arnold Bennett's voice can be overheard in every page of this book. It has his reticences, his sudden revelations and betrayals, his candid comments on things and people, and his keen observation of the world which, to the end of his life, he enjoyed and yet never ceased to criticise and desire to improve.

RICHARD SUNNE.

WORKS AND DAYS

The Labouring Life. By HENRY WILLIAMSON. Cape. 7s. 6d.

It is seldom now that we see a reference to Richard Jefferies. Perhaps Mr. Williamson is the only contemporary who names that author, so recently a favourite, with simple affection; he puts him with Gilbert White, Hudson, and Hardy.. Not all of us would do that. Jefferies, whose avowals of love for nature rose to a pitch of desperation, as though he feared nature's serene indifference, wrote at a time when there happened to be a category of "prose-poetry," the beauty of which was freely quoted, and without smiles. But we have grown shy of rhetoric —maybe political eloquence and its outcome has made us wary. Whatever the cause of our distrust of it, rhetoric does not mean for us the art of speaking or writing effectively, but of an opulent show of sentiment about things or ideas in which we have but slight or no interest. We do not, for example, dismiss as rhetorical an extravagance of doting sentiment about sex, especially when it is candid.

Jefferies' *Story of My Heart*, for these reasons, would be enough to send berserk any scholarly young critic of these days, if he could be persuaded to face the book to the end, which is unlikely. I should not blame him for his impatience. Because of what I remember of it, nothing would induce me to read it again. But it is unlikely that he would glance at more than the opening passages of that book, which would embarrass him—a quite natural consequence of surprise by emotion in the nude, and no ascertainable cause for it but trees and turf—and then he would put the book down, mildly puzzled. Turf, however delicate, never excites us. There is nothing of hayseed in our subliminal nature.

It is out of fashion, too, to mention the heart, which is now chiefly a seat of verifiable morbidity. To name it sentimentally has the same effect on us as a reference to other matters had on nice Victorians. We look away. We have heard nothing. Jefferies regarded his heart with steady and innocent gravity, when its affairs were all with the woods and fields. Mr. Williamson has been compared with Jefferies, but except that his admiration for that "poet-naturalist" has encouraged him to write feelingly of otters, birds, fishes, marsh, sand dune, and village life, he is a long way this side of Jefferies, with the chasm of the war between. It was probably the war which turned so sensitive a writer to a life apart from ours, and to the poets who had celebrated it. To have survived the Somme, and then to sink into nothing more inimical than the arms of a tree or the bosom of a dune in the Torridge estuary, with nothing in sight but Lundy and Hartland Point—the livid face of the Butte de Warlencourt actually vanished in the light of a Devon morning, as though it had been only a shocking nightmare—was enough to make a lacerated mind dance in joy again to Jefferies' eloquence: a sort of emotional thanksgiving. The black remembrance of the doings of men made it turn to the large indifference of nature in happy relief. To watch all day the apparitions of trout in water running quickly over smooth stones cleaned away old thoughts.

I think I can say that the people for whom Jefferies wrote would have regarded in consternation much that Mr. Williamson has to say. Though the sentences of this modern naturalist can flow as lush, now and then, as ever was expected by the admirers of Ruskin and other earlier writers attuned to "prose-poetry," yet he will break away abruptly with a satirical comment, often directed against himself, which the solemnity of those who used to enjoy "prose-poetry" would have thought as unseemly as brawling in church.

Mr. Williamson is, in fact, modern enough; his revolt from the obscenity and dementia of the war years has turned his interests away from men in the cities, and he concentrates on peasant life, falcons, and such; just as other men of his age, survivors of the war like himself, who have not turned their backs on the life and art of the cities, discharge their revulsion in attacking society wherever they guess it will feel it most. We should not be ungrateful for the form of revolt preferred by Mr. Williamson; the deep emotion he shows at times over objects which never respond to human affection has the same origin, I should guess, as the inconoclastic hate for our conventions which is now so usual in the arts. Since the war, I have found it impossible to read Jefferies; but Mr. Williamson's *Labouring Life* belongs to a world I know.

This book shows Mr. Williamson to be settling down. He has a steadier eye, and is seeing things in the round; he can even get outside himself and take a long scrutiny of Mr. Williamson, whose leg he then pulls. They who did not care for his last novel will enjoy this fragment of autobiography, with the life of the Devon village of Ham going on around, and in the distance the estuary of the Taw and Torridge. A young man over from Flanders, a stranger, settles in the village. He intends to go about with a note-book, to keep himself busy, in the writing of a comprehensive record of life in an English village. But many unexpected things interrupt him. His doorway is frequently darkened by callers with news or none. Instead of recording the life of the village he becomes part of it, and then, of course, doubts that he has the power to interpret it. It was not so simple as he had thought. The villagers are teaching him.

Then again, even while he is watching it, its immemorial rhythm, induced by the seasons and the tides, begins to change. The war had thrown it out, but it might have settled into its ancient measure. But the faster beat of the life of the cities invaded the place. The radio came, and the charabanc. The tastes and demands of summer visitors altered the value which the people of Ham attached to things, and bungalows began to rise. Some of the countryside became eligible sites, and these were the indirect cause of much bitter local feeling about the proper place for a new God's acre. Nobody who owned land near the village wanted that sacred acre next to his property. Its market value would fall, for visitors do not care to see a graveyard from their bedroom windows.

The scandal of that dispute, its intrigues, the doings of Farmer Furze and other salty local characters, the annual fair at Barum, the birds and beasts, the changeful character of the stream which came down from the hills, traversed the village, and lost itself after some miles in the saltings and sands of Bideford Bay, and the ways of the village children—these Mr. Williamson has recorded, with himself as a stranger in the midst, not according to his first serious and deliberate plan, but just as things happened to fall out; and that, we know, they rarely do with obvious relevance. So his book, which became as casual as the drift of the village stream, and a receptacle, like the stream, for anything the villagers dropped into it, has comfortable qualities which almost certainly would have been missing had not its author discarded, through indolence and in mockery of his own seriousness, his first elaborate design upon Ham. I think this is as good a book as he has written, and we have not had the best of him yet.

H. M. TOMLINSON.

THE CANADIAN KING-MAKER

Politicians and the War, 1914-1916. By LORD BEAVERBROOK. Lane Publications. 7s. 6d.

As time slips by, Lord Beaverbrook says, people more and more forget the atmosphere engendered by the War. But the critical reader of this diary-record need not be concerned with that atmosphere; nor need he trouble about "the jealousies, the feuds, the personal ambitions of politicians" upon which in his two volumes Lord Beaverbrook has had so much to say. He will give his attention to the narrative. The part played by the Canadian, Sir Max Aitken, in the inner affairs of the Cabinet during the War makes one of the most curious episodes of British political history. As we follow his narrative through the later events of 1916 we are led to subject it to a two-fold test. We must ask, first, how accurately it reveals the governing forces of the November-December crisis, and secondly, what degree of candour the author has allowed himself with respect to the one politician about whom he is understood to possess full knowledge, Bonar Law.

The reader who thinks of himself as having a fair memory for the events of England in wartime may be not a little surprised by Lord Beaverbrook's picture. It is singularly out of focus, especially as regards the position and activities of Mr. Lloyd George. The first Coalition Government was formed in June, 1915. It was subjected to merciless attack from the beginning, in the interest of "a more resolute conduct of the War," and the most conspicuous political fact of 1916 was Mr. Lloyd George's mounting power in the country and the unsleeping efforts of his backers, in the press, to destroy every public man who stood in his road—beginning, needless to say, with the Prime Minister. Lord Beaverbrook gives us nothing of this. His book seems almost to imply that Mr. Lloyd George was a relatively unimportant figure at the time of his succession to Kitchener at the War Office. He suggests that until the very end of the complicated moves which led to the fall of the Asquith

Government Mr. Lloyd George was not aiming at the first place. He says that as late as the very day on which the Cabinet storm burst Tory Ministers were making the surprising accusation that Mr. Lloyd George wished to be the *second* man in the Government. Oddly enough, as some readers will think, the chapter on the press and the crisis is the most meagre in the book; but it should be remembered that when engaged in overturning the War Government Lord Beaverbrook had not the controlling interest in any newspaper. He was the Conservative Member for Ashton-under-Lyne, almost unknown as yet to the Conservative leaders, and a comparatively recent acquaintance even of Bonar Law, his fellow New Brunswicker, whose interests he served with noteworthy devotion down to the posthumous triumph of burial in the Abbey. Lord Beaverbrook adds one or two fragments to our knowledge of Northcliffe in 1916; but it has to be said that the first half of this volume, if taken alone, would give the uninstructed reader a most misleading notion of political events and movements in England during the critical third year of the War.

But, it may be objected, that is not the theme of *Politicians and the War*. Its author is telling of what he knows, and especially of what he did, concerning the end of the Asquith regime. Very well: let us see how he deals with those episodes of the crisis in which his own actions and those of Bonar Law were of decisive importance. By the middle of November Sir Max Aitken is well launched upon the great adventure. It is a conspiracy to finish Asquith as War Prime Minister, and to create a triumvirate—Carson, Lloyd George, Bonar Law—in the form of a War Council wielding all power outside the Cabinet. In Lord Beaverbrook's account of the enterprise in its earlier stages there is little of importance that is new—except, perhaps, some details relating to Sir Edward Carson and the grotesque attempt to have him "put over" as a great administrator and a dynamic leader of the English people. Lord Beaverbrook tells the story in pointed detail. At the start, he informs us, Bonar Law agreed with him as to the imperative need of a change in the direction of the War, but he looked upon Lloyd George as a self-seeker and he refused to be drawn into anything that seemed like an intrigue against Asquith. Before the end of November, however, he had changed his position. He threw himself into the project of a supreme and very small War Council, with Lloyd George as chairman. But he knew that the Conservative Ministers were unanimously and fiercely against it. "They saw in the whole plan," says Lord Beaverbrook, "simply a scheme for the further aggrandisement of Lloyd George"—their old enemy and still their enemy. Lloyd George knew himself to be without Liberal support; Bonar Law, among the Tory Ministers, knew himself to be entirely alone—it is Lord Beaverbrook who states the facts thus, with abundance of supporting detail. Now observe what happened.

On December 2nd the Conservative Ministers met and adopted a resolution, of which Bonar Law took charge. It was definitely, emphatically, anti-Lloyd George. It stated that the Government could not continue as it was, that a change must be made, "and, in our opinion, the publicity given to the intention of Mr. Lloyd George makes reconstruction from within no longer possible." Lord Beaverbrook says that this resolution was "decidedly ambiguous." He shows that it was as clear as day. In the plainest words he displays the anti-Lloyd George attitude of the Ministers who adopted it, and in excited words he goes on to tell us how he saw the menace it contained for the conspirators and how he fought his chief ally over it. But Bonar Law, obviously, was obliged to carry the resolution to Asquith, and in writing of that momentous Sunday call Lord Beaverbrook becomes rhetorically indignant. A charge of bad faith, he says, was laid against Bonar Law. It was asserted that he had failed to "impress on the Prime Minister the extent of the hostility felt by his Conservative colleagues to Lloyd George and his claims," and, Bonar Law's friend adds, "one can hardly imagine a more terrible accusation against any public man."

> His word is the last in the world to be doubted when he states, as he did, that he explained the whole situation to Asquith with the most complete frankness.

The charge is such, Lord Beaverbrook contends, that it might well be left to refute itself by its inherent absurdity; still, he thinks it "ought to be met by a true and contemporary account of what happened." We cordially agree. For the true and contemporary statement we may turn to Asquith's *Memories and Reflections* (Vol. II, p. 131) and note the reference to "the resolution which was passed by the Unionist Ministers on Sunday, December 3rd, *but was not shown to me by Bonar Law*."

It is all quite clear. The Tory leader's word is to be taken, and Lord Beaverbrook's, too. Bonar Law *explained* the position to Asquith, taking care not to hand over the resolution. If Asquith had seen it he would, of course, have asked questions about its meaning, and Bonar Law would have been obliged to explain that the Tory Ministers, setting themselves against their nominal leader and against Lloyd George, were proposing something to the Prime Minister's advantage—that was, as they thought, the quickest and surest way, by the resignation of the Government, to the expulsion of Lloyd George. When Bonar Law left Downing Street the Prime Minister cannot have known that his Tory colleagues were on his side, holding to the view that he was still indispensable. Hence the fatal Sunday evening parley with Lloyd George; then the inference, supported by the notorious *Times* leader, that the Prime Minister had surrendered, and the instant veering of the Tories with the wind. Headed by the incomparable Curzon, as Lord Beaverbrook ingenuously has it, "they strike the Asquith flag and hoist the Jolly Roger of Lloyd George."

DOMINIQUE

Dominique. By EUGÈNE FROMENTIN. Translated by V. I. LONGMAN. Gerald Howe. 7s. 6d.

Fromentin was born in 1820 and died in 1876. He was a painter—not a very good painter—possessed of more distinction than originality, the type of artist whose criticisms of art are so well-informed, sensitive and discriminating that his own work is apt to come as an anti-climax. It is true that his pictures of the Near East brought him a measure of contemporary fame; but this fame did not long survive his death. By aptitude, temperament and genius, Fromentin was a master of verbal harmonies.

We need not infer, though, that he missed his real vocation; nor would it be quite accurate to assume that he mixed, in short, diluted, the two arts. Fromentin remained a painter first and foremost; yet it was into literature—though literature was but a side-line—that he poured out with the greatest facility his natural gifts. He prepared himself for literature by the practice of painting; and one notices, as one follows his career, the gradual transference of his energies to the new channel. In his earliest books, the influence of painting is still uppermost; in his masterpiece, it controls the method but not the theme.

His travel books are, none the less, a rare achievement. He is writing of his journeys in North Africa, and again and again, with enviable ease and clarity, he describes the enormous landscape which he traverses or the odd figures of his multi-coloured escort. Above all, he is felicitously exact; and, to appreciate his descriptive method for what it is worth, one should compare it with a page, say, of Pierre Loti. How clear-cut is the trained vision of the painter beside the picturesque divagations of the literary man!

For, as a painter, he makes no attempt to seem literary; and although, in his quality of observant Frenchman, very little gets past the writer's eye, he spares us those magniloquent caracolings which often go with the literary use of the French language. One must add that he possessed a natural gift of style. Fromentin was never slipshod nor cheaply effective, but employed words with the delicate feeling of a born writer. He was perfectly at home among words, and had not yet lost his acuteness from undue intimacy.

Dominique is a product of the Second Empire; its author was forty-two when it was published, but the novel, both in its subject and its tone, harks back to the romantic heyday of an earlier period. Like Gérard de Nerval's *Sylvie*, it exhales the lyricism of the 'thirties; like *Sylvie*, too, it is retrospective and deeply personal—a vision of youth, seen in middle-age and coloured by the autumn melancholy of a distant landscape. It breathes the sadness elsewhere caught by Gérard de Nerval and repeated with variations by Marcel Proust—"l'amère tristesse que laisse un songe evanoui . . ."

This dream was no mere cobweb of the brain. Allowing for a certain rearrangement and for the obvious disguise of places and people, few books are closer to autobiography. Dominique is Fromentin himself, and Madeleine, to whom Dominique devotes his youth, the object and idol of an early passion which was thwarted first by marriage and then by death. It led to

nothing—that is the essence of the book. Madeleine, though she loves and is loved by Dominique, lengthily resists and finally subdues her inclination. Thus the "moral" is blameless, the story pure; and the whole interest, the whole intensity of Fromentin's narrative, depends precisely on the absence of any flowering. It is a study of passion in a vacuum, of desire which continues ardent because unslaked, of that perverse and transcendental platonic concupiscence "qui ne possède vraiment que parcequ'il ne possède pas."

The protagonists gain fervour from the sacrifice, but do not forfeit their credibility as human beings—which alone would be eloquent of Fromentin's skill. *Dominique*, in this respect as in several others, is reminiscent of Balzac's exquisite *Lys dans la Vallée*. Both stories have a charming landscape background; but whereas the background of Balzac's tale suggests the landscape of the fifteenth century French missal—the white chateau with a clear stream at its foot, the vineyards, the terraced gardens and yellowing woods—Fromentin sets the personages of his drama against the prospects which had enchanted his own youth. And here, it must be admitted, he is incomparable; in no other book is the dramatic movement related so indissolubly to natural scenes. Dominique grows up in a lonely manor-house; and his author, without a trace of sentimentalism, describes the progress of the seasons across the country—the flat and marish neighbourhood of La Rochelle—as they are mirrored by the existence of a sensitive child:

> Each season brought its own guests, and every visitant chose forthwith its own dwelling-place: the birds of spring in flowering trees, the autumn birds in taller trees, and the winter visitors in thickets, evergreen bushes and laurels. Sometimes in mid-winter or even in the first autumn mists, from the most solitary part of the wood, a rarer bird would take wing some morning with an unfamiliar flight—swift, but rather ungainly, and very loud. It was a woodcock that had come in the night: it flew up, striking against the boughs, and darted through the branches of the tall bare trees visible only a moment, just time enough for us to see its long straight beak. Then we saw no more of it till next year, at the same time and in the same place, so that it seemed to us to be the same wanderer returning.

But the countryside is more than a trimming of the hero's life; it is Dominique as, no doubt, it had been Fromentin. He is wedded to the country, its sights and sounds; and later, when he leaves the manor-house to go to college, the humid and echoing gravity of the provincial town, its bristling belfries, dank courtyards and sullen river, play as determining a part in his spiritual growth. Through it all moves Madeleine, the source of illusion; and it is Madeleine, with her southern accent and her pale skin, who gives its peculiar perfume to the story—that aroma of which a French critic has said that it is "léger et doux comme l'iris, qui nous rappelle tout et rien . . ."

One can find no higher praise for the present translation than to say that this pervasive delicate fragrance, so innocuous, so heady, so finely compounded—virginal and passionate in the same breath—may still be detected through the English rendering. *Dominique* will always have its public, and one hopes that Miss Longman's careful version will add a new complement of devotees. As long as literature is read for its own sake, Fromentin can be sure of his immortality. PETER QUENNELL.

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

A Scientist Among the Soviets. By JULIAN HUXLEY. Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d.

Seeing Soviet Russia. By HUBERT GRIFFITH. Lane. 3s. 6d.

Russian Close-Up. By C. F. A. MAITLAND-MAKGILL-CRICHTON. Chatto and Windus. 5s.

From Baltic to Black Sea. By ARCHIBALD FORMAN, M.C. Sampson Low. 12s. 6d.

Russia, Market or Menace? By THOMAS D. CAMPBELL. Longmans. 7s. 6d.

Socialist Planned Economy in the U.S.S.R. Martin Lawrence. 5s.

There is no slackening in the stream of books, big and little, grave and gay, about Soviet Russia. Of the six before us, four are by English tourists, one by an American farming expert, and one by Russian economists actually engaged in the working of the Plan. None of them, except the last, is heavy metal. Professor Huxley, Mr. Griffith, and Mr. Maitland-Makgill-Crichton made short trips, mostly on the beaten track, and they tell us, inevitably, a great deal that is familiar—of the workers and peasants in the factories and on the farms, of the children in schools and crèches, of propagandist plays and films, of the crowded trams and the ubiquitous bug and the tricky rouble. Mr. Forman has more to tell of, for he went a longer round—down the Volga to Stalingrad, to Rostov, over the Caucasus to Tiflis, and back by the Crimea and Odessa to Kiev. Professor Huxley and Mr. Griffith see it all through sympathetic eyes; the other two find more to criticise and condemn. But despite all the discomforts, squalor, shoddiness, dullness, and the rest, against which he inveighs, Mr. Forman finds much substantial achievement. He records, as many others have done, the amazing enthusiasm of the youth in the new Russia, and he has no doubt that "the Soviet Union has come to stay." Mr. Griffith not only agrees with him on that point, but makes an attack on those organs of the English press which are trying to deceive their readers about it with a stream of malicious and stupid lies. His indignation is sharpened by his personal experience. He was sent to Russia by a great London daily paper, and he was to write articles for it when he returned. He wrote the articles, keeping his statements "studiously moderate"; but the paper refused to publish them—they were "inopportune," he was informed.

The most interesting chapters in Professor Huxley's book, as is fitting, are those in which he deals with science in Soviet Russia and with the revolution in education. In most branches of pure science he considers that the Russians are in the front rank, and are turning out new and fundamental research work at a great rate, though in biochemistry and physiology (saving always Pavlov's work on the brain) they are behindhand. The rulers are alive to the practical importance of this research to their plans, and are prepared for a liberal expenditure on it. "What a contrast with this country," cries Professor Huxley, as he goes on to describe, all too summarily, what is being done by the Institute of Plant Industry under its famous director, Vavilov. On the new educational system in the schools and universities, and outside of them, it is difficult as yet to pass any confident judgment, and Professor Huxley does not attempt it. He has praise for much that is clearly praiseworthy. But he suggests that the Russians may be making the same kind of mistake (though in a different way) that we made in imposing on the community at large a type of education which had been developed for a restricted class in another age. "The Russian experiment of a general industrial bias to education is bound," he says, "to be unsuited to many children, and it cannot but fail to provide many trained types who would be useful to the community. It can be justified as an emergency measure; but if it fossilises into a dogmatic and universal system, it will be bad." To which, we suppose, the Communists will reply that, if they find they have made a mistake, they will rectify it, as they have rectified others, before any serious damage is done.

Russian Close-Up hardly fulfils the hopes that are raised by its publisher's blurb. Mr. Maitland-Makgill-Crichton went out with various advantages, including the ability to speak Russian perfectly. But, unfortunately, he appears to have had no historical or sociological background to give weight to his judgments, and some of his comments are exceedingly naive. He remarks on "the Russian habit of eating curious things that look like dried black seeds," and adds that he has no idea what these are. (Perhaps by this time somebody has told him that they actually were seeds, sunflower seeds, and that this habit is as common in Russia as the chewing-gum habit is in America.) On the other hand, he is quite prepared to make sweeping statements, such as that "those who entered the commune"—a collective farm at which he spent an hour or two—"did so either from lack of money or for lack of brains," and that to a Russian peasant "religion is his entire and only existence." He admits, however, that the collectivisation of the farms represents an immense improvement both in agricultural methods and in the standard of life of the people.

On these points Mr. Campbell goes into considerable detail. Mr. Campbell, who is the owner of a wheat farm of 95,000 acres in Montana, was invited by the Soviet Government to go to Russia and advise them. He refused at first, largely because he had strong anti-Bolshevik prejudices, but eventually overcame his scruples and paid two visits. He was captivated by Stalin (whom he contrasts in a rather innocent way with the dangerous and violent Trotsky), but he did not fall for Communism, and he thinks that individualism will come—is indeed already beginning to come—into its own again. His thoughts

on that subject, however, are less important than his views on things that he really understands. He was very favourably impressed by the collective and the State farms, though he admits a number of defects, and by the conditions of the rural workers that he saw. And his study of Soviet agriculture and industry has convinced him that Russia is not a menace, but a market which it is rank folly for America to despise. He might have imputed the same folly to Britain. But his concern is with his own countrymen, and he seems to be under the impression that the rest of us are "aggressively seeking orders from the Soviet Union." Every country in Europe, he says, "realises that Russia is the world's greatest market for manufactured goods, and they all intend to get their share of the business." Alas! it is plain that Mr. Campbell is not very familiar with the gentlemen in Whitehall and Westminster.

Socialist Planned Economy contains the material which was submitted by an official delegation from the U.S.S.R. to an international congress at Amsterdam last August. It deals with the system and scope of the Five Year Plan, its development in the different branches of industry and in agriculture, and the changes it has effected in labour conditions. Its masses of facts and figures and argument are naturally not light reading; but they are well put together, and they give a valuable picture of Socialist planning, as the planners see it—and as they want others to see it. The picture may have its faults; but it poses plainly what Professor Huxley calls the question of questions: "Can any nation afford to go on, can it indeed keep itself from disaster, without wholesale planning?"

THE DOCTOR'S DISCIPLE

Etzel Andergast. By JACOB WASSERMANN. Allen and Unwin. 10s.

The Etzel Andergast who gives the title to this translation—the American version is called *Dr. Kerkhoven*—is the Etzel whom readers of *The Maurizius Case* will remember as the sixteen-year-old son of the judge who condemned Maurizius for a murder which he did not commit. It was Etzel who established the prisoner's innocence. Readers of *The Maurizius Case* could not fail to recognise the greatness of the book, but they recognised it as the greatness of a fragment not of a whole. The story of Etzel the boy was admittedly a prelude to the story of Etzel the man. "In the coming work, Etzel's mother," so the reader mused, "will step from the shadow and link herself up into some pattern with the rest. Etzel will pass from his beautiful and noble boyhood into a manhood no less noble. There will be some great achievement of the soul to balance, artistically, the downfall of Maurizius. *The Maurizius Case* is a long book but its successor will be as long, or possibly the whole will form a trilogy."

That a second volume—even longer than the first—is not enough to carry out the plan which Wassermann has set before him is now made evident. The book ends with Etzel and his mother in a house in the mountains covered deep with five days' snow.

> The house was a grave in the snow. He had died and been buried in that grave with an outworn reality; with a new reality he would be resurrected from it.

In this concluding sentence Wassermann gives us a hint that what we have sought in vain in *Etzel Andergast* will be found in its sequel. In the present book Etzel's character and the part which he plays is definitely subordinate to the character of and the part played by Dr. Kerkhoven; and the early manhood of the doctor's disciple—and deceiver, for Etzel carries on a passionate love-affair with his Master's wife—is painfully disappointing in its contrast with the magnanimous boyhood of Judge Andergast's son and critic.

The glory of this volume—and the term is not extravagant—is revealed in the earlier chapters dealing with Joseph Kerkhoven's development into a healer extraordinary of men's souls and bodies: a development due to a stimulation dependent upon his friendship with an older man, who is introduced to us in the opening pages as one about to die. He does die, but not until he has revealed to Kerkhoven a power in himself before unknown. The character of Kerkhoven is of extraordinary interest. In the delineation of this healer of souls Wassermann shows his kinship with the Dostoevsky of *The Brothers Karamazov*. Joseph Kerkhoven has not the complete single-mindedness of Alyosha—he is only in part emancipated from Etzel Andergast's "hell of the thousand alternatives"—but it is not unnatural to name the two men in a breath and to put them side by side—even if only to see how they differ.

Although Wassermann may recall Dostoevsky in his picture of Kerkhoven it is with another Russian that it is most natural to compare him. Wassermann's trilogy almost inevitably challenges comparison with Gorky's. In *The Maurizius Case* and *Etzel Andergast*, as in *The Bystander* and *The Magnet*, we have the opening volumes of a work written on an enormous scale, dealing with an immense number of briefly envisaged characters in addition to the major group, and covering periods of the utmost upheaval and devastation. Wassermann's central figure is an infinitely more sympathetic and significant character than Gorky's, and for that reason, if for no other, the concluding volume of the Etzel trilogy will be awaited with greater interest than the concluding volume of the Clym trilogy. Unless it prove remarkably inferior to its predecessors it will be a great book, for in spite of the temporary diminishment in Etzel's greatness *Etzel Andergast* is very remarkable. It has, for all the intricacy of its varied characterisation, integrity of purpose, and an intensity none the less passionate for the discipline with which its purpose is directed. Its successor will be awaited with eagerness.

THE PRIVATE FACE

The Orators: An English Study. By W. H. AUDEN. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.

> Private faces in public places
> Are wiser and nicer
> Than public faces in private places,

and Mr. Auden's is a very private face. Readers of his *Poems*, published last year, will be prepared for difficulties and excitements: *The Orators* provides them. This collection of prose and verse pieces, "a single work with one theme and purpose," which nevertheless is hard to grasp and state, has a fine compelling quality despite its obliquity. The difficulties are not on the surface; nothing could be briefer and plainer than Mr.

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Auden's expression; they spring rather from the need which Mr. Auden shares with other young modern poets of relating his poetry more closely to the roots of his experience. Mr. Eliot has familiarised us with the close relation between a poet and his literary sources; he has provided us with enough clues to make *The Waste Land* completely intelligible to anyone who has read widely in English poetry and in a section of French nineteenth century poetry. But there is this great difference between Mr. Eliot and Mr. Auden: Mr. Eliot's obscurity has its literary sources, which can be traced out; Mr. Auden's obscure sources are in his life and not in what he has read. There is a mass of experience, of which his poetry is only the iceberg-top: we can only guess at what is underneath. His difficulty is in bringing us as close as possible to this mass of experience without loss of austerity and compression—essentials of his art; the nearer he gets to it the stronger is the impact of his poetry and the greater its individuality. But it does not get any easier. *The Orators* is in part a statement of poetic faith, largely symbolical, and in part a satiric attack on society, which has no room for poets like Mr. Auden. It makes Mr. Auden much more *interesting* as a figure, and to some extent it enlarges one's understanding of his poetry. Those who are already sympathetic if rather baffled readers of him, will be grateful for the book: those who are not will probably never read another line. Just as well, he may say.

It seems to me—I may be wrong—that Mr. Auden has reached a stage where myth-making is as important to him as writing poetry. *The Orators* is an attempt to create a personal myth. Hence the careful setting of insignificant bits from a diary, the baffling references to friends and unknown minor incidents, the symbolism, the parade of private humour and of the mysterious private sorrow. The book reminds me curiously of some of Cocteau's opium drawings, of those vertebrate human figures constructed of great tubular nerves, severe yet agonised in their stance. Mr. Auden as a poet lives very much on his nerves. His quick perception, the irritation of the poet against society—"What do you think about England, this country of ours where nobody is well?"—are strongly nervous. Much of this book is satire lightly expressed in a symbolism which yields an oblique contemporary beauty and gives Mr. Auden the chance of enjoying his own joke. (He tends to a masonic code for friends.) *The Orators* begins with a Commemoration speech, which is followed by a litany invoking famous detectives. There is a Wound to which the poet addresses an ironic love letter, an Uncle who mysteriously half-advances from the past, the Airman (the poet), the Enemy (society), and other symbols taken from everyday life. It is characteristic of the book that this symbolism has a strangeness, beauty and originality of its own which give it value even when what it stands for is remote or has never been suggested. The reader will probably understand Mr. Auden better if he reads at the same time his contemporaries, Mr. C. Day Lewis and Mr. Stephen Spender, who are akin to him.

Perhaps inevitably, I have rather blurred the outlines of his book; the fault, I think, is not altogether mine. The poems in it are plainer, particularly the six odes of the last section, which contains fine things. And lest I should give a wrong impression of the lucid beauty and vivid compression of his prose, I will quote a brief passage:

> Going abroad to-day? Under a creaking sign, one yellow leg drawn up, he crows, the cock. The dew-wet hare hangs smoking, garotted by gin. The emmet looks at sky through lenses of fallen water. Sounds of horn in the moist spring weather, and the women tender. . . .

With so much in this book that is fine and original, one hesitates to ask the author for more *explanation*. Yet that is what is needed. He works so intimately, but at such a distance. One hopes that time will bridge the gap, and that we will get nearer to him or he to us. Meanwhile, *The Orators* is the most unsatisfactory statement of faith that a poet ever put forward, and one of the most arresting.

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The Works of William Shakespeare. The text of the First Folio with Quarto variants and a selection of modern readings. Edited by HERBERT FARJEON. Vols. I–V Seven Vols. in all. Nonesuch Press. £3 12s. 6d. each.

The first volume of the new Nonesuch Shakespeare was published a little over three years ago. The fifth volume which has just appeared completes the literatim reprint of the whole of the First Folio of 1623. The two final volumes will contain *Pericles* and the *Poems*, together with the full text of those earlier quarto versions of certain plays (*e.g.*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*) which differ so substantially from the First Folio as to defy collation. These quarto versions however are of interest rather to the literary archæologist than to those who read Shakespeare for pleasure.

The main purpose accordingly of this edition has already been achieved in the five volumes now before us. That purpose was to provide lovers of Shakespeare with an accurate and yet thoroughly readable transcription of the actual text of the First Folio, free from all the emendations, conjectural or otherwise, of later editions. There exists already, of course, Sir Sidney Lee's photo-lithographic reproduction of the First Folio, but this, to say the least, is not easy or really pleasant to read. The editor of the present edition, Mr. Herbert Farjeon, has followed the original text quite faithfully, including even such printers' errors as a misplaced comma, or "speeed" instead of "speed." All he has done is to facilitate the actual reading by using clear (and very beautiful) modern type and by such trifling changes as the substitution of "ss" for "ſ," "th" for "y," "i" for "j," "man" for "mã" and so on.

The happy result of his work will certainly come as a revelation to many a reader. The extent to which the abandonment (in all modern editions) of the capital letters and the brackets which Shakespeare so freely used has slurred the authentic accent of the original is astonishing. Their restoration actually makes the verse easier to read and easier even to understand. The rhythm and accentuation leap to eye. The difference is almost comparable in some cases with the difference between reading an unfamiliar passage to oneself and hearing it spoken out on the stage by a good and well-versed actor; and Mr. Farjeon is certainly justified in suggesting that "once this discovery has been made by any sensitive reader it is unlikely that he will be able to endure the perusal of nineteenth and twentieth century texts without considerable irritation and impatience."

But the text of the First Folio has its blemishes as well as its merits. Some passages are so misspelt or otherwise textually confused as to be practically unintelligible without the assistance of earlier versions or later emendations. In the Nonesuch edition the necessary help is provided by alternative readings printed in the margin which the reader may consult or ignore, as he pleases. No authorities are quoted, but if the marginal reading is derived from an earlier quarto it is printed in small roman type, and if from some later edition in small italic type; so that the reader knows exactly where he is, so to say, and can read straight on without having to break off to seek elucidations in his bookshelves.

We hope that one day this beautiful text will be reproduced at a price that will make it available to the general reading public. Meanwhile, however, it is far from our intention to suggest that the price of this edition—twenty-five pounds odd for the seven volumes—is too high considering all the work involved and the perfection of the production. Only 1,050 numbered sets are available for sale in the British Isles, the remaining 550 sets being earmarked for America. But these should all be sold without much delay and when the publishers have thus recouped themselves for their great initial expenditure they will be wise, we believe, to lose no time in issuing a second edition less elaborately bound at something like, say, a guinea a volume.

FANTASY

The Fair of St. James. By ELEANOR FARJEON. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.

Two lovers in a cathedral city in central France—a broken umbrella, an orange drink, a beggar, a hunchback waiter, an optician, and a blue rose—these are but some of the enchanting ingredients which go to the making of this idyllic fantasy. Miss Farjeon quickly transports her lovers to their abiding country—Cloudcuckoo land, whose entrance was, in this case, through an arch of hollow, painted wood, white and gold. There, in the fair of St. James, they—or rather Laura, for Jimmie doesn't get much of a look-in until the last chapter—have many wonderful adventures. The really exciting fact about this book is that every question asked has for answer a story: as in the Arabian Nights, every person has been hero or heroine of some strange happening, yet all the stories are but part of one story, of which Laura and Jimmie are become part, in which they are both lookers-on and participants in the action. *The Fair of St. James* is in the best traditions—it is close cousin to such classics as Laurence Housman's fairy epic, the older *Lost Legends of Nursery Rhymes*, which appeared in Aunt Judy's Magazine, and George MacDonald's *Dealings with the Fairies*. Yet it is infinitely novel, being a book for grown-ups rather than for children, with the sadness about it and the pathos which belong to this world rather than to Fairyland. The thoughtless, good-for-nothing King of France, whose flirtation with Giroflée caused all the ensuing tragedy, is an attractive enough villain, despite his greed for artichokes, and his pseudo son, the chef Claude, is a brave, gallant creature; but there is too plentiful an admixture of tragic and comic: too swift a transition from sentiment to wit. Something is wrong when an importunate beggar catches a dwarf by the ankle and tells him, "You can't escape Jesus like that—Jesus Christ, who gives to the poor, you know," and when a woman who dies in travail is of so little account; but perhaps, in Fairyland, it is better to take nothing seriously. And no fair since the world began was half so delicious or exciting or gay as the Foire St. Jacques—it is worthier a pilgrimage than ever was Compostella, and who would not rather wear a blue rose than carry a shell?

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SHORTER NOTICES

The Mystic Rose. By ERNEST CRAWLEY. 4th Edition. Edited and revised by TH. BESTERMAN. Watts. 2s. 6d.

Crawley's work was first published in 1902, eleven years after Westermarck had produced his monumental *History of Human Marriage*. For years it has been scarce and expensive. Now Messrs. Watts have given us the entire original edition, revised and enlarged by Dr. Besterman, who has added criticisms of later theories and explanations. It is altogether admirable that this work should now become available at so low a price and in so attractive a guise; and it is to be hoped that other sociological treatises of equal importance will be issued in the same series.

The Genius of Louis Pasteur. By PIERS COMPTON. Ouseley. 12s. 6d.

Despite a somewhat clumsy opening and a tiresome habit of dropping from time to time into more or less irrelevant prosing on the naughtiness of the modern world, Mr. Compton has given us a clear and at times dramatic account of Pasteur's triumphs. Pasteur was accused by his adversaries of being theatrical, which he was not; but he was dramatic, as for instance, when at a conference of medical men discussing puerperal fever a member—apropos of Pasteur's interjected statement that the microbe was carried from patient to patient by the nursing and medical staff—stated that such a microbe would never be discovered: Pasteur rose and drew the outline of *streptococcus pyogenes* on the blackboard and said: "There, that is what it looks like."

Water and Grass. A Study in the Pastoral Economy of Southern Europe. By E. H. CARRIER. Christophers. 21s.

In certain parts of Southern Europe climatic conditions have from very early times brought about a great semi-annual migration of flocks and herds from their summer pastures in the mountains to their winter pastures on the plains, an ordered movement of domestic animals similar to the seasonal migration evolved for themselves by certain creatures of the wild. This seasonal movement is called by the French *transhumance*, and it has had profound social and political, as well as economic, consequences; moreover, there is an odd fascination about the history of these moving armies of beasts, with the nomadic shepherds who herd them, and the remarkable laws and institutions (such as the famous Mesta of Spain) to which they have given rise. Miss Carrier gives a careful account of the history of the great *transhumance* in Italy and the two Sicilies from the days of Rome, in Spain under the Mesta, in Provence, in the Balkans and in the Pyrenean area, followed by a study of the pastoral mountain life. Her book will be useful both to historians and to geographers, but it somehow leaves the impression that an opportunity has been missed; the subject is an admirable one and no general study of it existed before, but, possibly because Miss Carrier is a better geographer than historian, her treatment remains somewhat superficial; and though she is aware of the serious economic and social problems to which *transhumance* has given rise, she does not always appreciate their significance. Still, all students of the subject will have to consult her book, which is, moreover, furnished with a useful bibliography; the only omission of importance would appear to be Mlle. Therèse Sclafert's book on *Le Haut-Dauphiné au Moyen Age* (1926), which contains, *inter alia*, an admirable study of *transhumance* in that district.

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About Motoring

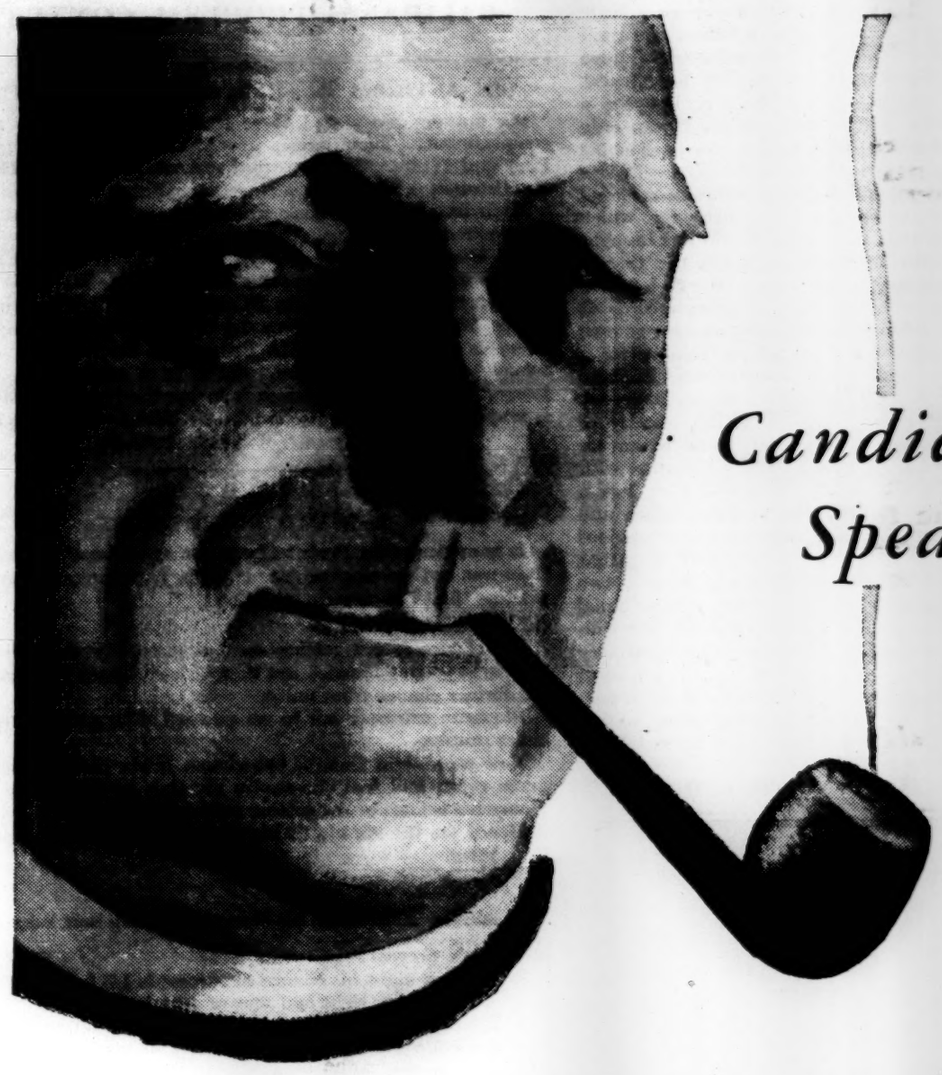
A RATIONAL RECORD

MANY modern records in various spheres of human achievement could only be characterised as insane if these days did not allot such absurd values to publicity. Idiotic stunts are planned and executed to secure notoriety for some ambitious individual or some marketable product; and the records are often devoid of all other value. But the present enterprise of M. André Citroën is far more rational, and by a natural consequence has received comparatively little attention from the British press. He has been running one of his 20 h.p. cars continuously day and night on the Montlhéry autodrome since March 5th. It was still running when I last inquired, and its average speed since the commencement of the test was better than 64 m.p.h., a total mileage exceeding 83,000 having been registered. Such a feat is of genuine interest to potential buyers of Citroën cars, as it indicates the quality which they can expect from their purchases. The distance is equivalent to many times more than six years' hard work on the road, as the engine is running continuously at a point rather near its maximum power output; if the car proves itself sound on full throttle it would obviously be even more durable at a more leisurely gait. Its trustworthiness is attested by two features of the enterprise. The rules of the French club do not allow any major components to be changed in the event of a breakdown or of excessive wear. Moreover, the maintenance of such a high speed is sufficient proof that the minor items, such as valves, filters, plugs, etc., are occasioning no real trouble. More than a mile has been covered for every minute which has elapsed since the car began to be timed. This speed covers the time spent in replenishing the tanks, in changing drivers, in renewing destroyed tyres, and so forth. However efficiently such routine work may be organised, it consumes many precious minutes; and the high speed could never have been recorded if the mechanism had caused any appreciable difficulties of a routine type.

Few details are vouchsafed about the conditions imposed by the French club. We are not told that the officials selected the car from the stocks exhibited in the various French showrooms, and we may therefore assume that the car was specially prepared by the manufacturer. This assumption in turn implies that the fit of every part was very carefully verified, and that the engine was specially tuned to furnish a rather higher speed than the 65–70 m.p.h. which one would normally expect from a 20 h.p. six-cylinder chassis of the mass-production type. Neither assumption detracts from the magnificence of the performance. The lack of interest in this astounding feat displayed by our own press is explained by the fact that the car is French, and that M. Citroën does not buy a great deal of advertising space in British papers, whilst his equipment—oil, fuel, tyres, plugs, etc., etc.—is also French, so that no subsidiary advertisers assist him to secure notice in our papers. Nevertheless, the record is at once the most rational and the most arresting of all the innumerable publicity stunts ever organised by the world's motor industries.

M. André Citroën was one of the great production engineers thrown up by the war, and at the signing of the armistice he transferred his genius and industry to the motor trade. I bought one of the first Citroën cars imported into this country. It was woolly, slow, comfortable, cheap, and trustworthy. It inspired many of us to prophesy a great future for his firm, because it betrayed a genuine originality in cheapening the popular motor car. Eschewing technicalities, so petty an item as the tail lamp foretold his future. In 1919 British manufacturers of popular cars were buying their tail lamps from specialist firms, and paying, I believe, 1s. 9d. per lamp, when ordered by the thousand; Citroën made his own tail lamp out of a tin length of tubing, fitted with two pressed end caps and a talc panel; they cost him 4½d. apiece. His cars rapidly improved in general efficiency, and inspired such a demand on British soil that he planned great factories at Slough, and side-stepped the McKenna duties, first by importing parts, and finally by manufacturing the bulk of his requirements over here. To-day the Citroën cars sold in these Islands are very nearly all British, except so far as the capital is concerned.

There are two models. The 12 h.p. four-cylinder competes with such cars as the Morris Cowley, and is listed at £195 for the



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five-seated saloon type. It is produced at higher prices with a great variety of coachwork, a seven-seated saloon, a de luxe saloon, a coupé, a sportsman's saloon, and so on. Citroën was, I think, the first European manufacturer to recognise the merits of the welded steel type of body. At first they were a little dingy in appearance, but their beauty and tastefulness advanced rapidly as experience grew. Our own manufacturers have probably learnt at least as much from him as they have learnt from America. We have overtaken him to-day, but for a number of years he was often a little ahead of us. I can only accuse him of one failure of judgment, a failure very pardonable in a Frenchman. He has never made the best of the British market, for he has never offered our buyers a sufficient range of models. He soon discarded his original 5 h.p. baby car, which might have brought him all that the 7 h.p. Austin has brought Sir Herbert; and even at this late date he flanks the 12 h.p. four-cylinder with no alternative model except the 20 h.p. six-cylinder which is even now achieving such gorgeous records at Montlhéry. Now a 20 h.p. six-cylinder is a very nice car to own and drive, but it is altogether too large and expensive for a great many households, especially in a country like England where technical developments are hampered by an arbitrary horse-power tax. So M. Citroën through a foolish paucity of models fails to grapple a motoring family firmly to his bosom for the term of their natural lives. A British family will start with a 7 h.p. Austin, and work up slowly till grandfather has a chauffeur-driven 20 h.p. Austin, and the younger males and females own the intermediate Austins. But there are obvious gaps in the Citroën range. M. Citroën will probably urge that his production system is simplified by adherence to just two chassis; but Morris and Standard and Austin offer at least equal value in the 12 and 20 h.p. grades without retaining the simplicity of a two-model production. Anyhow, the Montlhéry record will justifiably boost the sales of the 20 h.p. Citroën most enormously. He has challenged our makers to equal or surpass this feat; and in case the mere passion of competitive sportsmanship is not sufficient to arouse them the challenge is backed by an eloquent wager of 1,000,000 francs.

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Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

Problem 9

SIX AUTHORS IN SEARCH OF A CHARACTER

Six authors are seated three a side in a first-class railway compartment. Their names are Black, Brown, Gray, Green, Pink and White. They are (but not respectively) an Essayist, an Historian, a Humorist, a Novelist, a Playwright and a Poet.

Each has written a book which some other occupant of the compartment is reading.

Mr. Black is reading Essays. Mr. Gray is reading a book by the author sitting opposite to him. Mr. Brown is sitting between the Essayist and the Humorist. Mr. Pink is sitting next to the Playwright. The Essayist is facing the Historian. Mr. Green is reading Plays. Mr. Brown and the Novelist were at school together. Mr. Black, who is in a corner seat, has no interest in history. Mr. Green is facing the Novelist. Mr. Pink is reading a book by the Humorist. Mr. White never reads Poetry.

Identify each of the six Authors.

Problem 7

THE MAD MILLIONAIRES

It is evident that Probability is not my solvers' strong point. This was not an easy problem, but it has stumped more competitors than I expected. Solution:

(1) *Blosheim's chances*:—

His chance of *not* getting married is readily calculated; his chance of getting married can then be ascertained by subtracting the former chance from unity.

Blosheim can only fail to get married if he guesses wrong six times running.

Now each night there is one chance in six that Blosheim will guess right, and five chances in six that he will guess wrong. Hence his chance of *not* getting married is 5/6.

Hence for the six nights his chance of *not* getting married is $\frac{5^6}{6^6} = \frac{15625}{46656}$.

Whence by subtraction his chance of getting married $= \frac{31031}{46656}$.

(2) *Blum's chances*:—

1. The *first* night his chance of success is 1/5 (since he has one chance of guessing right and four of guessing wrong).

2. The *second* night (there are four chances out of five that a second venture will be necessitated) his chance of success is 1/4. Thus his chance of success on the first or second night $= \frac{1}{5} + \frac{4}{5} \cdot \frac{1}{4} = \frac{2}{5}$.

(3) The *third* night (there are three chances out of five that Blum will get thus far) his chance of success is 1/3; since only three competitors are left.

Hence Blum's chance of getting married $= \frac{2}{5} + \frac{3}{5} \cdot \frac{1}{3} = \frac{3}{5}$.

It is thus clear—

(1) that Blosheim has the better chance of getting married;

(2) that the chance that both millionaires will remain bachelors

$$= \frac{15625}{46656} \cdot \frac{2}{5} = \frac{3125}{23328}.$$

Points awarded to:

Dr. L. C. Adam, Arlyn, Agitat, D. Barber, Blind Mole, Dr. C. O. S. B. Brooke, W. E. Benham, J. B. Channon, Cooper, L. C. Clarke, T. W. Chaundy, Crooked Dean, Rev. C. Dinwoodie, C. M. Douglas, V. J. D., W. P. Hudson, N. Hartley, Initio, A. J., P. K., A. C. Lynch, J. P. McEvoy, G. P. Meredith, Mercutio, Macbeth, L. R. M., W. Oldham, J. L. Priston, G. C. Potter, Rigel, L. G. Roussin, M. Ross, S. T. S., F. P. Streeten, D. G. Sopwith, Sciss, W. A. Whitehouse, C. H. Waddington, C. H. M. Wilcox, Zylo.

Additional Points:
Problem 5: H. L. Cox, P. K., W. A. Lynch, Judith Todd.
Problem 6: Cooper.

Competitors for the Quarterly Prize are reminded that solutions (on **foolscap**, and with names and addresses clearly shown) must reach this office, addressed to *Caliban*, not later than midday on the **following** Thursday. Consideration, however, will be given to competitors residing abroad; every effort will be made to enable them to participate.

The Queen and Her Sister

The Queen was twenty years old.

CALIBAN.

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HIPPODROME. BOW BELLS. Wed., Th., Sat.

QUEEN'S. HEARTBREAK HOUSE. Wed., Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. SOMEBODY KNOWS. Tu., Fri.

STRAND. PARTY. Wed. & Thurs.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

SETBACK TO CONVERSION?—IF GERMANY DEFAULTS—ANGLO-SOUTH AMERICAN BANK AND OTHERS—RUBBISH TRUST.

JUST when British Government long-dated stocks had been carried to a 4 per cent. yield basis, just when the market had begun to canvass the idea that the Government should give notice on June 1st to holders of 5 per cent. War Loan that their capital is to be repaid at par on December 1st unless they exercise one of several options to convert, Mr. Ormsby Gore made fun of the whole thing in a singularly indiscreet speech to the Stafford Unionist Association. As if Stafford cared! The Government finances, however, make Mr. Gore see red. He deliberately raised doubts as to "whether we could even get to next April without still further taxation or cuts." Taxation, he said, had reached the point at which the law of diminishing returns was beginning to operate. The capital and income of the nation were declining and no real trade recovery was yet in sight. And so on. Mr. Neville Chamberlain, taking the cure at Harrogate, will probably derive comfort from the thought that his gout is less painful than his colleagues. The gilt-edged market, on the instigation of Mr. Gore, was thus induced to take profits and the prospects of an early conversion scheme appeared much less bright. Bearish talk was very much in evidence. That is why it is so important, Mr. Gore, to say nothing at this time to frighten speculators or investors out of their Government stocks. We badly want to get this War Loan conversion through and to save £20 to £30 millions in interest charges.

* * *

It is true, of course, that taxable income is declining and that the intrinsic security of British Government stocks has deteriorated since 1913-14. Income tax was then 6d. in the £ and the service of the National Debt called for only 15 per cent. of the total tax revenue, which in turn represented only 7 per cent. of the total national income. To-day income tax is 5s. in the £ and the service of the National Debt in 1931-32 called for 44 per cent. of the total tax revenue, which in turn represented nearly 20 per cent. of the total national income. This means that the service of British Government stocks was covered 95.23 times on national earnings in 1913-14 and only 11.36 times in 1931-32. But this is not the way to look at the conversion of 5 per cent. War Loan. When the yield on long-dated Government stocks has been forced below a 4 per cent. basis by the unremitting pressure of cheap money, the Government can fairly take the risk of calling the £2,000 millions of 5 per cent. War Loan for redemption, knowing that it can come to some terms with the joint stock banks and investment institutions and can raise money on Treasury Bills or by a short Treasury Bond issue to repay the private individuals who refuse to convert or the institutions which are now holding 5 per cent. War Loan as a "short." I have said many times in these columns that it would be wise not to delay the conversion of 5 per cent. War Loan unduly. The *Economist* lends its weight to this counsel in a powerful article calling for an end to Treasury procrastination. Is the Treasury asleep or is it merely stupid? If it is waiting for Lausanne it will wait next for Geneva and for all the other summer resorts where vital conferences are bound to take place in the next few years on the financial crisis. If it is waiting for still lower interest rates it is merely stupid, because in a grand conversion attack on 5 per cent. War Loan the object is to split up the loan, as to half into a long-dated stock and as to half in two short-dated stocks, thus allowing the short-dated stocks to be refunded on a lower yield basis if the fall in interest rates is protracted. The *Economist* suggests an offer of (1) Four-year 3½ per cent Treasury Bonds at 100, (2) a ten or fifteen year 4 per cent. stock at 100, (3) a long term 3½ per cent. stock, the conversion option to be one point more favourable to the converter than the ruling price of 3½ per cent. Conversion (which would cause a fall in the latter). The *Economist* terms for the short-dated bonds are on the generous side. I would suggest a 3 per cent. four-year Treasury Bond at 99.

* * *

How will the gilt-edged market behave if Germany defaults and declares a moratorium on all debts, political and commercial? In that event the discount market can no longer pretend to regard the names of certain acceptance houses on bills as being "good." No doubt the gilt-edged market would suffer a setback, but I do not believe that it would be very serious or permanent. The possibility of a German default has been long foreseen by the London money market, and I believe that preparations have been made for extending help to certain acceptance houses, the Bank of England, the joint stock banks and the discount market all taking a share of the burden. About £40 millions of British bank money is locked up in Germany and about £15 millions in Austria and Hungary. I can hardly believe that the banks ever expected to get their money out of Austria and Hungary, but it will be recalled that the joint stock banks in their balance sheets at December 31st last assumed that their German credits would be repaid at their full value, for no specific provision was made for meeting the contingency of a dead loss. Indeed, it was probably expected that about 10 per cent. of the German credits would be repaid in 1932 and possibly 15 per cent. in 1933 and that the balance would be repaid in the course of a protracted reparations holiday. But these frozen German credits have already crippled the London bill market, and if there is a complete German default something will have to be done to unthaw the discount houses.

* * *

The case of the Anglo-South American Bank has a bearing upon this difficult problem. It had been known for a very long time that this bank was in trouble. It was announced last week-end that an arrangement had been reached whereby a group of banks headed by the Bank of England had taken over certain assets of the bank connected with the nitrate industry amounting to over £7 millions, which could not at present be realised. The Anglo-South American Bank gives a contingent guarantee to the relieving banks, but this guarantee will rank after deposits and all other liabilities to clients. In other words, the substitution of a deferred contingent liability for a cash liability enables the Bank to look its depositors in the face and to go on trading. Similar arrangements must be made for certain acceptance houses in the event of a German default. This brings me to another question. What right have the private acceptance houses to expect support from the Bank of England? Of course, as long as the Bank of England is not nationalised and is regarded as a purely private institution it can give help to other private banks as it pleases. But the Bank of England is not entirely a private institution, even to-day, for the Treasury is guaranteeing it against exchange losses arising out of manipulation of the exchanges. Should the Bank of England extend help to private banks without insisting on adequate supervision of their business? It is well known that the acceptances and the foreign deposit banking in which these private banks have indulged far too recklessly in the past few years involved this country in grave danger last autumn. It is clear that their activities will have to be controlled or supervised in the future if the sterling exchanges are to be adequately protected. And why should firms be helped who have been guilty of indiscretion or recklessness, while firms which have behaved cautiously are made to suffer? At every point we come up against this thorny question of the State control of the money machine.

* * *

Looking through an investment list of foreign bonds this week I was surprised to find that the only capital appreciation shown was on Chinese Customs Loans. This seemed to suggest that trade is better when there is no Government to worry the traders. A little banditry in Central Europe might improve the prices of Central European Loans. For an outlay of £600 it is now possible to obtain £5,000 worth par value of foreign government bonds, as the following table will show.

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£1,000 Roumania 4%, 1922	15	150	40
£5,000		600	£115

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21st May, 1932

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F. R. PASCOE.
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21st May, 1932.

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